



STELLAGAMA  
PUBLISHING



***LURIAN TRAILING CLUSTER***

***BOOK 3: ADVENTURES***

**FOR STARS WITHOUT NUMBER: REVISED EDITION**

**BY JOSH PETERS**

# *LURIAN TRAILING CLUSTER BOOK 3: ADVENTURES*

**BY STELLAGAMA PUBLISHING**

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## Contents

Lurian Trailing Cluster .....	1
Book 3: Adventures.....	1
For Stars Without Number: Revised Edition.....	1
By Josh Peters .....	1
Lurian Trailing Cluster Book 3: Adventures .....	2
Introduction .....	4
Welcome back to the Lurian Trailing Cluster! .....	4
Game Master Information .....	6
Lurian Trailing Cluster System Data .....	8
Moloch .....	10
Kadmon .....	18
Vanth.....	31
Byalstok.....	39
Yama.....	47
Lepra .....	58
Further Adventures in the Lurian Trailing Cluster .....	64
Abreia (LTC2 26).....	66
Aipaloovik (LTC2 9).....	75
Basajaun (LTC1 34).....	82
Byalstok (LTC3 23):.....	90
Enke (LTC2 15).....	99
10. The Lost City of Kayzar:.....	103
Kadmon (LTC3 11).....	108
Lepra (LTC3 XX) .....	114
Lur (LTC1 25) .....	122
Meza Virs (LTC1 43) .....	132
Moloch (LTC3 XX).....	139
Rudianos (LTC2 34) .....	144
Vanth (LTC3 XX).....	148
21. Izur—Discovering Alien Ruins:.....	152
Yama (LTC3 XX) .....	156
23. We Will Fight Them on the Beaches...: .....	160
Open Gaming License .....	165

## **INTRODUCTION**

### ***WELCOME BACK TO THE LURIAN TRAILING CLUSTER!***

The Lurian Trailing Cluster (LTC) is a group of fourteen adjacent systems in Karta Sector that form a natural trading zone. During the Terran colonization era, misfits, rebels, exiles, and immigrants settled these worlds looking for a fresh start. Six hundred years ago, a psychic cataclysm caused the Deluge, a time of chaos, death, and the near-total collapse of human civilization. Most of the worlds of the LTC survived the Deluge because they were already self-reliant, but some weathered the calamity better than others. Now that the Deluge has finally receded, these traumatized societies are ready to reclaim the stars. This book details the worlds not yet fully discussed in the previous two Lurian Trailing Cluster guides, and provides a number of adventures or adventure hooks for all fourteen worlds in the LTC.

### **REQUIRED MATERIALS**

*The Lurian Trailing Cluster Book 3: Adventures* is designed for use with Sine Nomine Publishing's excellent game *Stars Without Number Revised Edition*. The complete free version of *Stars Without Number Revised Edition* is available for download at:

<http://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/230009/Stars-Without-Number-Revised-Edition-Free-Version>

Stellagama Publishing's *Lurian Trailing Cluster: Book 1* and *Lurian Trailing Cluster: Book 2* are highly recommended to get the most out of this product. They can be found at:

<http://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/193545/Lurian-Trailing-Cluster--Book-1>

[http://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/198149/Lurian-Trailing-Cluster-2--The-Lost-Flame-of-Prometheus?manufacturers\\_id=9571](http://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/198149/Lurian-Trailing-Cluster-2--The-Lost-Flame-of-Prometheus?manufacturers_id=9571)

A pencil, paper, and a complete set of polyhedral dice are also required to get the most out of this—or any—gaming book.

### REFERENCES TO OTHER BOOKS

In this book, references to specific pages in other books and products are shown as the code for the relevant book followed by the page number, both in italics, thus: *SWN x* or (*SWN x*) Stars Without Number Revised Free Edition: *SWN2e*

- Suns of Gold: Merchant Campaigns for Stars Without Number: *SoG*
- Skyward Steel: Naval Campaigns for Stars Without Number: *SS*
- Engines of Babylon: *EB*
- Starvation Cheap: *SC*
- Lurian Trailing Cluster: Book 1: *LTC1*
- Lurian Trailing Cluster: Book 2: *LTC2*

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Josh Peters is a high school math and history teacher, an accomplished drummer, and avid tabletop RPG gamer. Josh has a Master's degree in history, and resides in Montreal, Canada, with his beautiful, patient wife and deviously adorable daughter. Another Peters sci-fi gamer is due to arrive in January 2018.

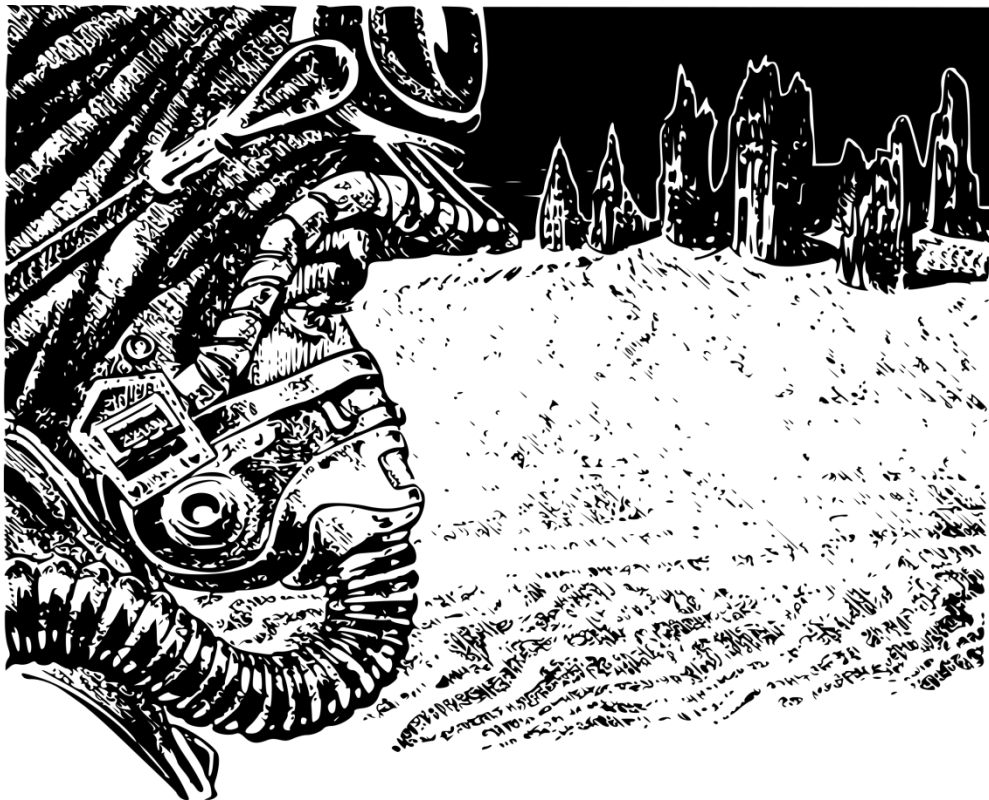
### STELLAGAMA PUBLISHING

Stellagama Publishing is a small, independent, international role-playing game publisher focused on science fiction gaming. We publish stuff for the White Star™ RPG; Stars Without Number, Sword & Wizardry: White Box™; the Cepheus Engine; and other 2D6 Sci-Fi OGL rules; Our interests are first and foremost to put forth enjoyable, immediately playable supplements, settings, and adventures for these games, for the enjoyment of our fellow players and GMs.

## GAME MASTER INFORMATION

Welcome to the final installment of the Lurian Trailing Cluster Handbooks for Stars Without Number. This book details the final six systems out of the fourteen that make up the Lurian Trailing Cluster. In addition, we have included twenty-three adventure outlines suitable for sandbox play, at various party levels, in various genres, and using a variety of approaches. Many of these adventures pick up similar threads and themes found throughout the LTC Handbooks, and GMs are encouraged to develop campaigns from them.

The worlds of the LTC are only just emerging from six centuries of isolation. While some technology has been recovered, like spike drives, and a rudimentary understanding of psychic powers, much more was lost, and has not been re-discovered. The exploration of the LTC is a main priority for every faction with interstellar ambitions. Small groups of interstellar adventurers are in high demand for a variety of dirty jobs that are beneath the purview of planetary governments or the Karta Trading League. Furthermore, this is a time where these very same small bands can make an enormous impact on the future history of the Lurian Trailing Cluster. All that is required is ambition, some well-calculated spike drills, and a thirst for adventure. It won't be easy, but determined players will be able to leave their indelible mark on the Lurian Trailing Cluster.



### A NOTE ON TECH LEVELS AND TERMINOLOGY

**The Deluge:** One of the inspirations for Karta Sector, the Lurian Trailing Cluster and the secrets it contains, is the Deluge Myth: that at one point, humanity was so corrupt and beyond salvation that a higher power decided to wipe the species out and begin anew. In the Lurian Trailing Cluster, the Deluge refers to the events that would quickly wipe out interstellar civilization in Karta Sector: the utter chaos, unmitigated violence, and societal collapse that occurred in the psychic cataclysm's wake.

**Tech Level 3+:** *Tech Level 3 with specialties* is a fairly common version of a Tech Level 3 society that experiences occasional interstellar contact. While the majority of the world's technology is solidly Tech Level 3, in some areas, typically space travel and weapons technology, the world is able to produce—often by salvage—simple versions of Tech Level 4 items. Spike drives are typically limited to Drive-1. Tech level 3+ worlds often have a definite “frontier” feel.

**Tech level 4-:** *Tech Level Low 4* is a slightly different phenomenon than 3+. In this case, the world is highly advanced in a variety of ways, but does not have much in the way of interstellar technology. At best, a TL4- world could manufacture a spike drive at Drive 1 rating, but often does not have the facilities or human expertise to do so. These worlds often have an otherwise high-tech feel, but are limited in their interstellar travel capabilities.

**The Order of Prometheus:** A pre-Deluge monastic order that worked to preserve knowledge and civilization throughout known space, and especially on the frontier. The Prometheans were deeply steeped in mysticism and mysteries, and not much is known about them in the Lurian Trailing Cluster. Their data library on Basajaun, better known as a *Flame of Prometheus*, was lost during the early days of the Deluge.

**The Merchant Guild:** A pre-Deluge interstellar trading organization. The Merchant Guild often made money acting as intermediaries between parties involved in difficult trade negotiations. The Merchant Guild did not survive the Deluge in the Lurian Trailing Cluster, but their impressive Prime Station orbiting Basajaun did.

**The Guardian Committee:** A highly secretive pre-Deluge interstellar intelligence agency tasked with hunting down anyone developing maltech devices. The Guardian Committee, if it survived the Deluge, is entirely unknown in the Lurian Trailing Cluster.

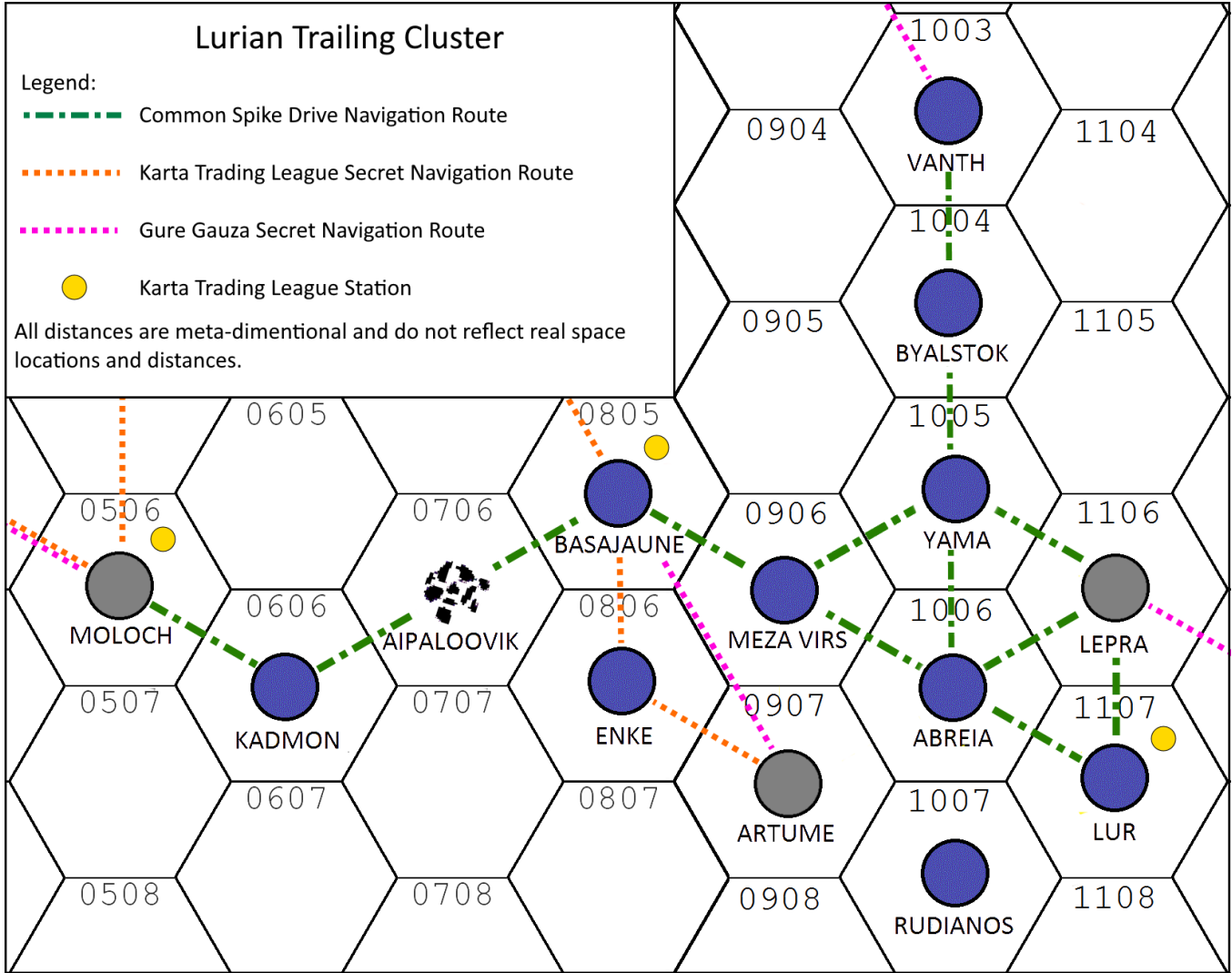
### *LURIAN TRAILING CLUSTER SYSTEM DATA*

The Lurian Trailing Cluster is a group of fourteen-star systems in Karta Sector. Notably, every system is inhabited, though some, like Lepra and Artume, are home to only marginal outposts. Many of the habitable planets of the Lurian Trailing Cluster were extensively colonized prior to the Deluge and were major success stories. Others, like Lur and Moloch, were colonized by fringe groups during the early years of humanity’s expansion into the stars. The Lurian Trailing Cluster is only now rediscovering interstellar civilization. The TL3+ societies found here are fully aware of their interstellar heritage, and have struggled mightily to reclaim the stars, while the TL3 worlds are unable to muster the resources to build spike drives.

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars	Tags
0506	Moloch	Thin	Cold	Immiscible	OP: 1000	4	3	M3V M9V	Tomb World, Outpost World
0606	Kadmon	Breathable	Temperate	Miscible	150 million	3	1	G8V M2V	Cold War, Heavy Industry
0706	Aipaloovik	Airless	Temperate	Remnant	200	0	1	M3V M4V	Abandoned Colony, Heavy Mining (former)
0805	Basajaun	Breathable	Warm	Hybrid	400 thousand	3+	2	M4V M3V	Colonized Population, Trade Hub
0806	Enke	Breathable	Temp-Cold	Miscible	600 thousand	3	2	K4V M7V	Sea-going cities, Xenophobes
0906	Meza Virs	Breathable	Temp-Warm	Hybrid	60 million	3+	2	G6V K7V	Badlands World, Warlords
0907	Artume	Airless	Cold	None	OP: 500	4	1	M5V	Bubble Cities, Flame of Prometheus
1003	Vanth	Breathable	Temperate	Hybrid	600 thousand	1	5	K3V M4V	Oceanic World, Restrictive Laws
1004	Byalstok	Thick	Temp-Warm	Hybrid	1 million	4-	2	G7V BD	Heavy Mining, Freak Weather
1005	Yama	Breathable	Temperate	Miscible	19 million	3		G8V K9V	Oceanic World, Civil War
1006	Abreia	Breathable	Temperate	Hybrid	5 million	3	2	K0V K5V	Desert World, Rigid Culture
1007	Rudianos	Breathable	Warm	Miscible	800 thousand	3+	4	G1V BD	Flying Cities, Tomb World
1106	Lepra	Corrosive, Invasive	Warm	Microbial	OP: 2000	4	1	F3III	Hostile Space, Gold Rush
1107	Lur	Breathable	Temperate	Miscible	15 million	3+	3	G4IV BD M3V M4V	Progressive, Liberal

See *SWN2e129* for information on world generation and world tags. “GG” indicates the number of gas giants present in the system, which are useful for refueling operations for suitably equipped starships. Entries in the “Stars” column correspond to the Morgan-Keenan stellar classification system. “BD” stands for “Brown Dwarf”. “OP” stands for *outpost*.





### MOLOCH

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars
0506	Moloch	Thin	Cold	Immiscible	OP: 100	4	3	M3V M9V

**Tags:** Outpost World, Tomb World

**Enemies:** A psychic ghost of *something* that once lived here. It will haunt the PCs and might drive them mad if left on board their vessel. Karta Trading League outpost Factor *Diego Vera*, who runs KTL Persepolis station as his own personal fiefdom. *The Chimera*, a pirate vessel that preys on shipping that enters into Moloch system in transit to and from the rest of the Lurian Trailing Cluster; its captain is the villain, *Bogdan Verzinsky*. Verzinsky is secretly a privateer, for whom he will not say.

**Friends:** *Cal Ithaka*, peddler and rumormonger on the KTL station. She is likely an old friend of a friend of the PCs. *Folarin Biaseh*, the Gure Gauza capo at Persepolis. He is also the main slave trader here, something that the PCs might have an issue with. However, he is also a fount of resources and jobs, and a friendly face in this lonely desolate place is a rare thing.

**Complications:** A micrometeor swarm is headed right for the PCs' ship as it refuels. A navigation beacon is malfunctioning, and sending out broad-band interference. A Karta Trading League vessel arrives and buys up all the supplies, leaving the player characters in the lurch and desperate. There are no survivors on Moloch, but there are psychic ghouls that stalk the ruins at night. The buildings on the surface are unstable and likely to collapse.

**Things:** Malfunctioning Karta League navigational beacon. Psychic trauma zone on Moloch. The Karta League outpost hydrogen fuel collection depot, orbiting the gas giant Mawet. An *ancient comm array* on distant the gas giant Typhon's moon. The last remnant of the ancient advanced civilization of Moloch. *Psitech relics* in the Illustra Bidea Academy vault.

**Places:** A desolate, airless moon of Typhon where a handful of ghoulish mutants have eked out an existence in an ancient comm array. Orbiting Moloch, witnessing the devastation. Visiting *Persepolis*: the small KTL station on Ateraz, where Karta League traders come to resupply before making their way to Basajaun, or to parts Spinward. A city square on Moloch's surface, covered in ash and bones. Deep in an underground maze of a ruined arcology, fleeing from a terrible entity that prowls the corridors.

**Trade:** KTL Trade Waystation Persepolis, on the moon Ateraz.

Goods	Type	Cost
1 Colonial Survival Supplies	Survival, Postech, Tools	10000
2 Fine Liquor	Luxury, Low Tech, Compact	10000
3 Medical Supplies, Postech	Medical, Postech, Compact	25000
4 Emergency Stasis Pods	Biotech, Survival, Rare, Bulky	25000
5 Tools, Medical Equipment	Tools, Postech, Medical	50000
6 Slaves	Sapient	25000
7 Drugs, Recreational	Luxury, Biotech, Compact	50000
8 Livestock, Gengineered	Livestock, Biotech	10000
9 Parts, Astronautic	Tools, Postech, Astronautic	25000
10 Small Arms, Projectile	Military, Low Tech	5000

**Friction:** 2 for KTL members, 3 for non-members.

**Supply and Demand:** +2 Astronautics, +1 Medical, -1 Cultural, -2 Agricultural

**Trouble:** 2, As Cosmopolitan World.

**Notes:** Persepolis is a gloomy place, trapped as it is under the thumb of the local KTL factor Diego Vera. Vera follows the letter of the law, allowing trade to occur freely, and offering supplies and assistance to spacefarers. However, Vera does not adhere to the spirit of the law: extra tariffs are applied to those who Vera feels are in need of losing their cargoes. Emergency supplies are limited, and anyone who can't pay the "administrative fees" will find themselves "slipping through the cracks" of a remote station like Persepolis. Note too that no expedition to Moloch has ever returned; should a group return with salvage, they would be able to fetch a great price for their wares.

**Fleet Build Points:** Zero. While there is much salvage to recover from the planetary surface, there are very few willing to venture down. As well, with an average population of roughly 100 souls, Persepolis Station does not have any space craft manufacturing facilities, and only limited repair facilities.

**Moloch Fleet:** The KTL has a pair of armed civilian spike-drive cutters (*LTC2 2*) at Moloch, and a handful of fighters cannibalized from old wrecks. These are stationed at Persepolis to deter any troublemakers or pirates from interfering with anyone going to and from the station. Moloch should be a bigger trade hub, but there are very few ships in the LTC that can manage the trip all the way to Moloch, and then even fewer that are equipped with the Spike-2 drive necessary to drill out of the Lurian Trailing Cluster. Recently, a pirate ship known as the *Chimera* has made a handful of raids on merchant freighters leaving Persepolis for Kadmon. The KTL is reluctant to mount a pirate-hunting expedition in Moloch, but it seems unlikely that the *Chimera* will go away on its own. Factor Diego Vera is now looking to hire a ship to hunt down the *Chimera*.

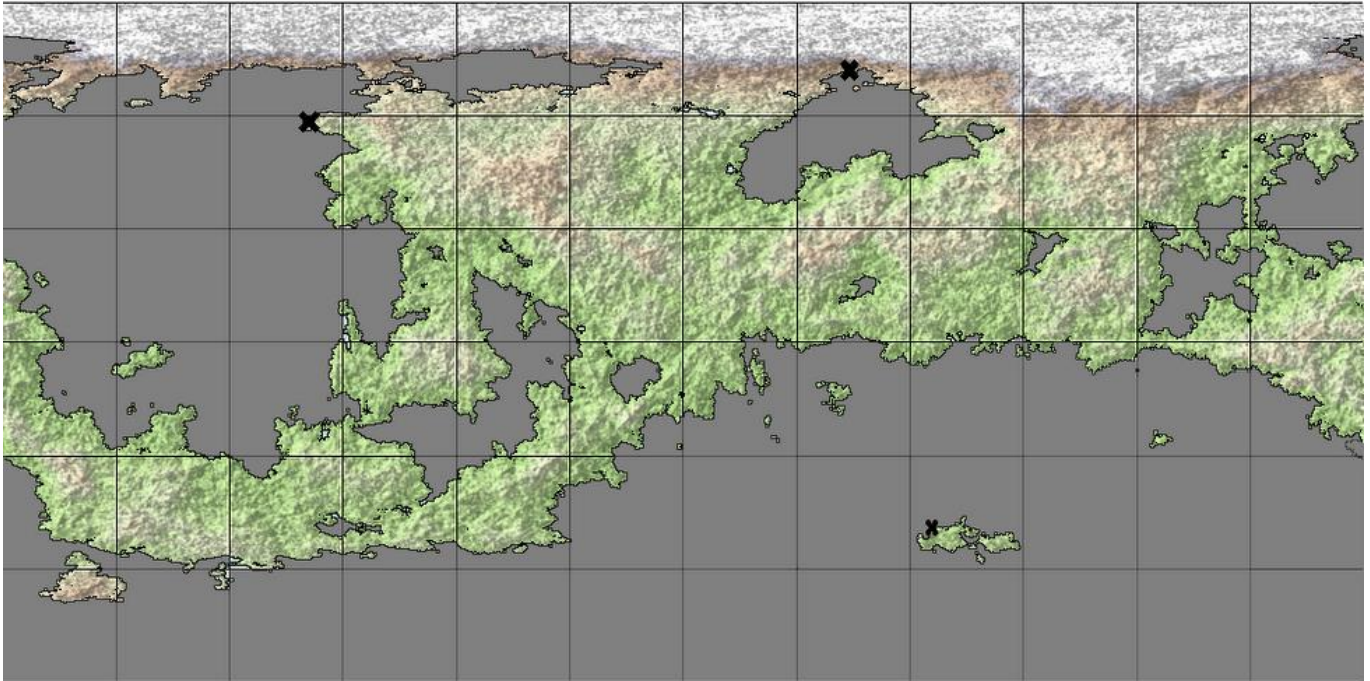
### SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Moloch system marks the Spinward edge of the Lurian Trailing Cluster. The main star Eris is a dim red dwarf. Its binary twin is an even dimmer red dwarf that has nearly exhausted its fuel supply. Flares from either star are rare, but when they do occur, they can be catastrophic. The system is host to a handful of terrestrial rockballs, all frozen and dead. The three gas giants here are blessed with extensive rings and moons, but there is no commercially viable asteroid belt. This entire system is a dead end for extensive settlement, but it is an important trade stopover to and from Karta sector.

Occupied Orbits	
0	Eris (M3V)
1	Ponos (Tiny rockball)
2	Algos (Small rockball)
3	Nakia (Medium sized, no atmosphere)
4	(Empty)
5	Moloch (one small moon)
6	Duellona (Gas Giant, 21 moons, rings)
7	Mawet (Gas Giant, 12 moons, 6a: Ateraz (Persepolis station))
8	Typhon (Gas Giant, rings)
18	Priya (M9V)

### PLANETARY OVERVIEW

Moloch is a horrible, desolate place. There was once life here, but the Deluge snuffed it out. Now, all that remains are vast tracts of polluted wastelands scarring the planetary surface. Whatever atmosphere was here has been irreversibly contaminated. Filter masks are required to breath the air. Poison-filled oceans, harsh wilderness, and the ruins of a once impressive civilization are all that remains. Whatever happened here during the Deluge wiped out everything. If this was the result of warfare, it was decisive and final. The ruins are impressive: massive wrecks of city-arcologies can be found across the planet, linked by a once sophisticated network of highways and railroads. Society was also networked via an advanced global telecommunications array; the transmitting antennas and receiver dishes still dot the landscape, even if the satellites are long gone. The planet was blessed with ample natural resources. All that remains are the corpses of cities, strewn with bones and ash. There were no survivors. Nowadays, scavenging is politely, but firmly, discouraged by the KTL officials at Persepolis Station. To that end, the Karta League has set up a beacon system at Moloch, mainly to warn people off, but also to monitor whoever does attempt a landing.



Black X's indicate major ruins on the planetary surface.

## **NOTABLE PLACES**

### ***RUINS OF MOLOCH***

Harribix, this planet's original name, has been forgotten, but its importance along the trade routes in Karta sector is still clear. These ruins are all that remain of a high-tech society that was immensely wealthy and powerful. Ruins of cities dot the polluted coastlines, rivers, and valleys across the planet. Many ruins are filled with bones, mountains of skulls, and other testaments to human cruelty and capacity to inflict suffering. Much of the destruction was wrought by feral psychics in the aftermath of the Deluge. There was a psychic academy on Moloch that was an advanced center of learning. When the Deluge washed over this planet, the Academy's psionic masters' death-rattles created more massive psychic shockwaves in turn, as they destroyed themselves and each other in gruesome displays of their power. The resultant mass psychoses tore society apart, and the leaders of Harribix deployed untold, evil, maltech weaponry in an apocalyptic war that destroyed whatever was left. Those who made it off-world were a fortunate few. There were no human survivors left intact on Moloch.

**Moloch Security Robots:** These automatic security drones scour the ruins of Moloch to eliminate any “anomalies” they might encounter. Many of these robots are quite effective murder-machines, activated by desperate citizens as their civilization crumbled around them. Others are more mundane: mall security drones, traffic drones, and the like, that were reprogrammed by survivors to help defend communities that are now long, long dead. Whichever type they are, if one appears, a small horde of them are sure to be close by. The robot listed below is a low-level threat. Higher level threats could consist of soldier bots and warbots (SWN2e 197).

<b>Moloch Feral Repair Bot (SWN2e 197)</b>			
Armor Class	14	No. Appearing	6d6
Hit Dice	1	Saving Throw	15
Attack Bonus	+1	Movement	10
Damage	Plasma Torch: 1d6	Morale	9
		Skills	Fix +1

**RUINS OF THE ILLUSTRABIDEA ACADEMY**

On the northern shore of a great toxic ocean lie the remains of the city of Distrikathir, and within its ruins, the massive Illustra Bidea Psionic Academy. The Academy has many psitech relics still hidden away in its depths. It also hosts horribly deranged ghoulish denizens who have existed here in strange psychically sustained stasis. They wait within the Academy’s once glorious walls for sentient beings to arrive, to feed on their psychic essences.

**Moloch Ghoul:** These creatures are the survivors that live in the Illustra Bidea, in a strange psychically preserved stasis. When living beings with sentient brains arrive, they will emerge and attack. The Ghouls look like horribly pale, black-eyed humans with deformed heads, stooped backs, and razor-sharp teeth and claws.

<b>Moloch Ghoul</b>			
Armor Class	13	No. Appearing	4d6
Hit Dice	4	Saving Throw	12
Attack Bonus	+5	Movement	10
Damage	Claw 1d4/claw 1d4/bite	Morale	11
	1d6	Skills	Stealth 2

Even worse, a horrible psitech/maltech engine known as the Metadimensional Psychic Filter, has been operational at the Illustra Bidea Academy for 600 years. This advanced experimental psitech device is now an engine of corruption which transforms psychic energy into physical manifestations. The MPF’s energy usually manifests as creatures representing the corrupted nightmares of the victims of Moloch’s final devastation. These will often appear in proximity to anomalous living human minds; the MPF’s final protocol is to destroy any anomalous psychic manifestations—which has been corrupted into meaning living human minds.

**Moloch Nightmare:** This is a typical example of a physical manifestation of psychic energy on Moloch’s surface. This entity exists only because of the Metadimensional Psychic Filter’s corrupting influence. It will appear in proximity to a group of explorers on Moloch, and usually attack immediately. Some of the more terrifying Nightmares will stalk their prey, truly living up to their names as they pick off a group one by one, changing slightly as the group’s mental state gets worse and worse. The one below is a multi-headed monstrosity with two sets of chewing mandibles, claws, and an acid spit attack with a 50m range.

Moloch Nightmare			
Armor Class	18	No. Appearing	1 (1d3 for more fun!)
Hit Dice	9	Saving Throw	11+
Attack Bonus	+9/+9/+9/+9/+9	Movement	15
Damage	1d4/1d4 claws	Morale	12
	2d6/2d6 mandible	Skills	Stealth: +4
	3d6 acid attack (Evasion save for half)		

The immediate physical danger to anyone brave enough to explore Moloch’s surface is only one aspect of the horrific Metadimensional Psychic Filter. This device has a much more insidious effect on the entire Moloch system. Because the final psychic energy influx into the Filter was so massive and composed entirely of human suffering, and because whatever remains of Moloch’s psychic energy field (if such a thing exists) has been negative and evil for the past 600 years, the MPF has been polluting the entire Moloch system with negative psychic energy: people will slowly, and surely, go bad while in Moloch. Psychic individuals are reserved a particularly gruesome fate. Any metadimensional sensor reading of this system will detect a strange, powerful, psychic anomaly coming from the planetary surface. This has several game effects:

1. Psychic characters receive double Effort in Moloch system.
2. Psychics have access to two higher skill levels in their psychic power of choice (this can be divided into two separate skills). The psychic also has access to a new psychic technique at their new power level as well.
3. This increase in power comes at a high price: *every* use of psionics in Moloch will require one Mental Effect save per power use, at the end of the day. Failure means a slow, undetectable, degradation in power: the psychic character temporarily loses one point of Wisdom for each failed saving throw. This loss remains until the psychic has left the Moloch system and has recovered for a week. If the character’s Wisdom is depleted, they go insane, and will act to cause their own deaths and the deaths of their compatriots.

### *KTL SPINWARD WAYSTATION PERSEPOLIS*

The gas giant Mawet has over a dozen large moons and moonlets, as well as a set of rings. The largest moon, Ateraz, is a frozen ball of rock and ice, and is home to the KTL's Spinward Waystation Persepolis. The station was once a long-abandoned mining facility, discovered and repurposed in the past thirty years. Persepolis now has an array of navigational beacons, a fuel depot, and a small starport with some rudimentary repair facilities for smaller vessels. Its permanent population is roughly 100 souls. Persepolis has become a clearing house of sorts for those traders moving from the Lurian Trailing Cluster to the Satyavati system past the LTC, and even more distant systems beyond. Though nothing as impressive as the wheeling and dealing that occurs in the Grand Bazaar at Prime Station, the traders that come through Persepolis are always looking to make a deal for *something*. Almost anything is available here at some point or another, and Moloch is far enough out of the way from Basajaun that many of the shadier deals that are tacitly approved or ignored by the KTL are brokered here. This includes the slave export trade from the Lurian Trailing Cluster, which is administered by the Gure Gauza, but with secret KTL cooperation at Persepolis.

**Note:** The long-term effects of exposure to the Metadimensional Psychic Filter's field have made themselves felt even on Persepolis. Brutality, greed and cruelty creep into the corners of thought. Non-psychics who remain here for long periods (especially NPCs) will become increasingly depraved.

**Language, Culture, and Religion:** The main language on Persepolis Station is English, though the Gure Gauza operators speak their own language in private. Other traders from further Spinward or Trailing will often use English, Hispanic, or the Sino-Slavic trade language, depending on their origins. There are no public religious observances on the Persepolis Waystation. In the ruins of Moloch, it is possible to find writing in nearly every language, especially at the Illustra Bidea academy, whose library is nearly intact.

### *BOGDAN VERZINSKY AND THE CHIMERA*

The Moloch system has recently been the site of a handful of pirate raids by the *Chimera*, a well-armed frigate of unknown origin. Thus far, one large merchant frigate has been completely destroyed, while another two were stripped, gutted, and left to drift until a rescue operation could be mounted. The survivors reported that captain Verzinsky and pirate raiders were efficient, brutal and nearly silent as they rounded personnel up. Notably, the crew of the *Doublecross*, one of the ships that survived a raid, report that the Verzinsky's pirates only stole a KTL electronic data packet destined for Persepolis Station. The KTL has made capturing the *Chimera* and its crew a priority, but few of its ships are able to stand up to the *Chimera's* firepower.



**Bogdan Verzinsky** is not a pirate. He is a privateer, working for the government of the Nezha Cluster, further to Coreward. The Karta Trading League is made up of defectors and mutineers from this cluster, and Verzinsky is tasked with intelligence gathering and raiding KTL ships, for the time being. Verzinsky is a cunning and ruthless operative, and his crew is loyal and efficient. Verzinsky and his men have been in the Moloch system for a couple of months, and are beginning to feel the effects of the Metadimensional Psychic Filter. His raids, already sharp and efficient, are growing increasingly brutal. He is contemptuous of what he sees as uncivilized throwbacks in the Lurian Trailing Cluster, and will not reveal his mission to anyone. See *LTC1 17* for more information on the KTL's origins.

<b>Bogdan Verzinsky (Level 7 Warrior)</b>			
Armor Class	17	No. Appearing	1 + crew
Hit Dice	7 (45HP)	Saving Throw	10
Attack Bonus	+9 (skill bonuses included)	Movement	10
Damage	2d8+2* Mag SMG	Morale Skill Bonus	9 Lead 3, as well as all Combat Skills

<b>The Chimera</b>	<b>Hull:</b> Frigate	<b>Power:</b> 15/1 free	<b>Mass:</b> 15/0 free
<b>Cost:</b> 5,090,000	<b>HP:</b> 40	<b>Crew:</b> 10/40	<b>Speed:</b> 2
<b>AC:</b> 16	<b>Armor:</b> 10	<b>Cargo Space</b>	60 tons
<b>Pilot +3 CP: 6</b>			
<b>Weaponry</b>	Plasma Beam (3d6, AP 10) Sand Thrower (2d4, Flak)		

<b>Defenses</b>	None
<b>Fittings</b>	Fuel Bunkers x1, Fuel Scoops, Armory, Ship's Locker, Extended Stores, Spike-3 Upgrade

<b>Monthly Total</b>	<b>Cost</b> 111,200	<b>Payroll:</b> 75000	<b>Stores:</b> 15000	<b>Maint:</b> 21200
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<b>Description</b>	The Chimera is an aggressively armed and equipped vessel designed for long-duration independent raiding missions. Its main weapon is its high-speed Spike-3 drive, something far beyond the technological capabilities of any faction in the LTC. It uses its high speed to chase down prey, and disable it with its plasma beam. The Chimera can operate almost indefinitely if it loots stores from other ships and uses its fuel scoops to refuel from gas giants.
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*KADMON*

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars
0606	Kadmon	Breathable	Temperate	Miscible	150 million	3	1	G8V M2V

**Tags:** Cold War, Heavy Industry

**Enemies:** *Alphonz Trang*, a senior agent of the Pact of Steel and desperate for any edge he can foist on his opponents, both domestic and foreign. He would use offworlders as disposable catspaws. *Katarin Pozetz*, an agent of the Progressive Empire. She will not hesitate to capture and torture off-world visitors to glean information. *1<sup>st</sup> Preceptor Melquana Inbar*, of the Camrosan Hierarchate Intelligence (*LTC1 23*). He is determined to establish a network of contacts and safehouses here, to win Kadmon over to the Camrosan Hierarchate once the population here is better suited for contact. The PCs will likely throw an unintended wrench in his plans. *Eduwa Ukim*, the Karta Trading League factor for Kadmon who is unhappy that non-League traders have arrived. He has plans of his own (see adventure seeds, later). *Herbert Aljabab*, a Pact of Steel industrialist who is selling military secrets to the United Workers Republic, and is too paranoid to be friendly.

**Friends:** *Penelope James*, a Workers Republic intelligence officer who thinks that offworlders can diplomatically resolve the three-way cold war stalemate. Pact of Steel Diplomat *Sophia Kamal* believes that brokering a trading deal with the new visitors while working to diffuse the tension on Kadmon is the best outcome. *Lisa Okoda*, a Pact of Steel underground union leader who is in need of allies in the face of increasing government crackdowns.

**Complications:** A naval standoff leads to a sharp military confrontation between the Pact of Steel and the United Workers' Republic. The KTL is willing to push the envelope and encourages the escalation of this conflict. The Progressive Empire conducts a large military exercise which is mistakenly interpreted by the Pact of Steel as mobilization to war. Cooler heads may prevail, but someone in the Empire has *lost track* of some anthrax bombs. A solar flare knocks out a series of radar installations belonging to one of the factions, which naturally reacts by moving to high alert and mobilizing bombers.

**Things:** The Progressive Empire strategic long range bombers armed with anthrax bombs, en route to bombard Jameston, capital of the Pact of Steel. The microfiche documents of UWR war plans. A Camrosan hand communicator left after a bloody skirmish in a Langolei back alley. Who sent these thugs, and why? Illegal union membership lists in the Pact of Steel. The specifications to the Pact of Steel's nuclear weapon prototype.

**Places:** A nuclear research facility in a remote desert. A command bunker in the Pact of Steel. A small hamlet outside of the starport city, where the Karta League takes its guests. A labour protest rally in Jameston. The Progressive Empire Imperial Palace, waiting for an audience with the Empress. A military parade in the United Workers Republic.

**Trade:** Industrial World (TL3)

Goods	Type	Cost
1 Colonial Survival Supplies	Agricultural, Survival	5000
2 Medical Supplies, Postech	Postech, Medical, Compact	25000
3 Housewares, Postech	Consumer, Postech	5000
4 Native Artwork	Cultural, Luxury	10000
5 Parts, Industry	Tool	10000
6 Postech Building Material	Tool, Postech, Bulky,	10000
7 Small Arms, Projectile	Military, Low Tech	5000
8 Gunnery Weapons, TL3	Military, Low Tech, Rare, Bulky	10000
9 Tools, Industrial	Tool, Postech	10000
10 Vehicles, Military	Vehicle, Military, Bulky	25000

**Friction:** Pact of Steel: 3, Progressive Empire: 3, United Workers Republic: 4

**Supply and Demand:** -2 Consumer, -1 Tool, +1 Agricultural, +1 Military, +2 Postech

**Trouble:** 3, as Industrial World or Tyranny.

**Notes:** Trading on Kadmon is always risky because of the high levels of international tensions that always seem to be the norm here. Other than the occasional misunderstanding leading to the detainment and execution of offworlders as spies, there generally won't be major disruptions to trade. Of course, canny traders might want to gain the trust of one of the factions on this world and supply them with particularly effective weapons that will change the balance of power. After all, the Karta Trading League is doing just that.

**Fleet Build Points:** 125. Kadmon has a large population and a well-developed low-level TL3 industrial base (roughly comparable to Earth's, circa 1950). Though unable to build spacecraft, much of Kadmon's manufacturing capabilities could be used to supply a space navy.

**Kadmon Fleet:** None. The Kadmonans have no space launch facilities, and their rocket science capabilities are minimally developed (enough for short range artillery rockets). Once they develop, or acquire, nuclear fission technology they will be better-placed to build system ships and the like. Still, they are a long way off from rejoining interstellar civilization as a space-going power.

### SYSTEM OVERVIEW

This system's main sequence yellow star is slightly cooler than Sol, which draws the habitable zone into closer orbits. There are three habitable planets in Kadmon system, but only one settlement survived the Deluge, Kadmon. Siftan and D'Bansa used to have extensive colonies, but all that remains on both worlds are ruins. The gas giant, Vakit, guards the inner planets from the solar wind of Ulan Odoi, the red dwarf flare star orbiting at a distance, but close enough that EM radiation from the star can make Kadmon's auroras spectacular to see. The asteroid belt here is not shielded from flares, thus much of it is still highly viable for mining, if dangerous. Lastly, a giant frozen methane iceball, Jovron, orbits slowly. This system on the Lurian Trailing main was once a hub of colonization activity. Now, much of the space lanes are littered with centuries old junk that did not survive the Deluge. Wrecks of old spacecraft, stations and debris can be found with only a little effort. The KTL and other independent salvage/scavenger operations have been ongoing, though very intermittent due to Ulan Odoi's unpredictable flare-ups.

Occupied Orbits	
0	Horia (G8V)
1	Katan (tiny molten airless rockball)
2	Mitorna (small airless rockball)
3	Siftan (Breathable, Miscible, Warm, Badlands World, Tomb world)
4	Kadmon (mainworld, 2 moons, Pecos, Logos)
5	Vakit (Gas Giant, 7 large moons)
6	D'Bansa (Breathable, Miscible, Cold-Temp, Radioactive World, Tomb World)
7	Asteroid Belt
8	Jovron (medium sized frozen iceball)
16	Ulan Odoi (M2V)

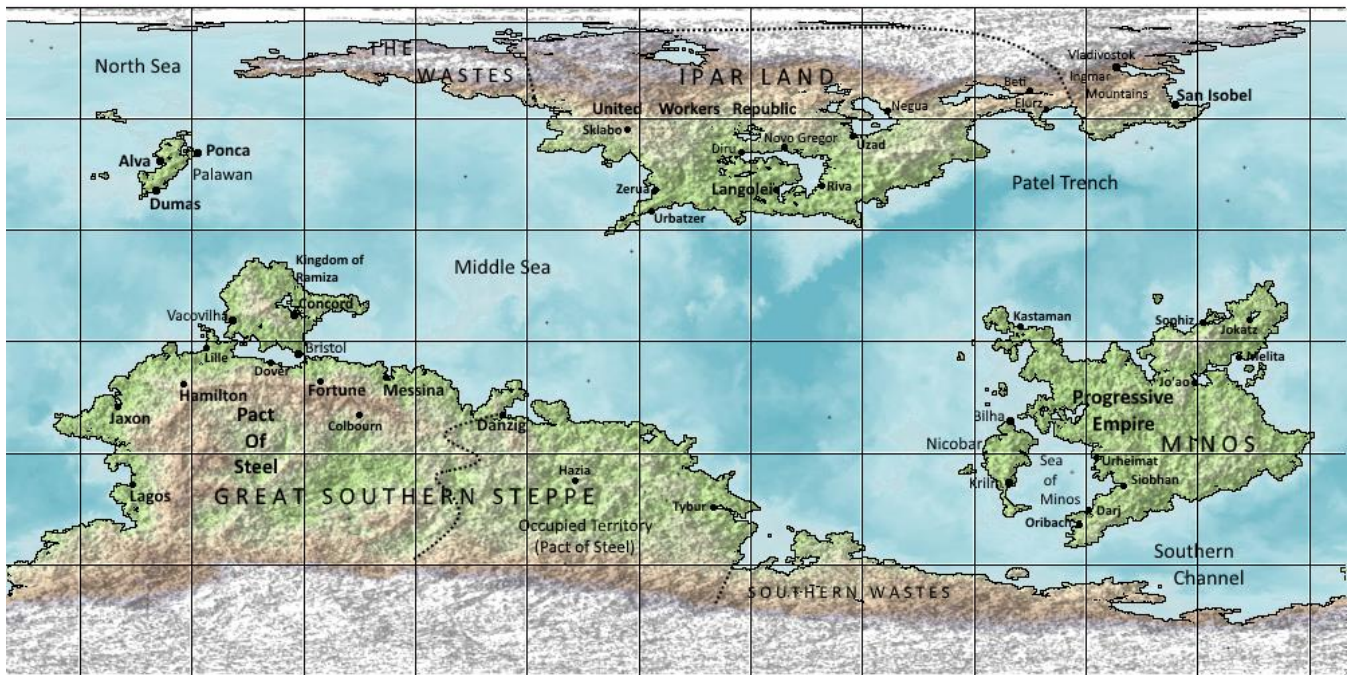
### WORLD OVERVIEW

Kadmon is a temperate, dry world with a thinner than average atmosphere. The biosphere is compatible enough for human metabolism, though much of the native fauna and flora are quite hostile or inedible. Human-compatible foodstuffs and animals grow on Kadmon, though only after extensive genetic modification had been performed centuries ago. Much of the flora and fauna are adapted to arid climates, since much of the fresh water is trapped underground. The human population is roughly 150 million, most of it urban, which stretches water processing facilities to the limit. Life here is bearable, and though the Deluge brought with it many privations, the inhabitants of Kadmon were spared suffocation for lack of breathable air, and they could grow enough crops to prevent mass starvation. Still, not all is well on the planet.

Kadmon is a world of stark beauty and contrasts. The northern continent, Ipar Land, is divided into three major zones. The Wastes, which consist largely of the frozen tundra and polar ice to the far north, the Ingmar Mountain range to the east, and the lowlands, centered around Center Lake and the Clearwater Sea. Ipar Land is a rugged, mountainous continent, with vast natural resources, ample freshwater, and a diverse ecosystem. The southwestern region is the continental breadbasket, where all manner of cereals and foodstuffs are cultivated.

The massive southern continent, Hegolurra, is quite different from Ipar Land. Arid, windswept and harsh, much of Hegolurra's Great Southern Steppe is barren and broken. Still, humans have made the best of the difficult environment, and small settlements dot the Steppe. This has created an overland trading network that stretches from the eastern Bay of Lament, through the Bandar Mountains, and finally to Sawyer Bay on the western coast. Much of the water in Hegolurra is trapped underground, forcing the inhabitants to drill deep wells and adjust accordingly during the dry season. However, there are pockets of lush vegetation to be found here and there, especially towards the equator.

The island continent of Minos is a heavily forested landmass with dark jungles on the northern coast. Minos is one of the few places with large rivers and large groundwater aquifers. As well, there are older mountain ranges to the northeast, and southeast. The heart of the continent is unexplored, save for the occasional intrepid researcher. There are rumors that lost primitive tribes of humans live in the dark jungles of Minos, and have remained out of contact for centuries.



### SOCIETAL OVERVIEW

The political situation on Kadmon is, in a word, volatile. As the Deluge receded, a three-way cold war emerged among the three largest authoritarian political entities: the Pact of Steel, the Progressive Empire and the United Workers' Republic. They are each more or less police states in control of massive TL3 militaries, and are slowly inching towards a highly destructive global mechanized war. All three states have large stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons. Making matters worse, the Pact of Steel is redeveloping rudimentary nuclear bombs. There are also a number of smaller states on Kadmon; they have to play a dangerous game of balancing their own interests against placating the larger three powers, lest they be invaded.

The cold war here has caused the otherwise robust societies on Kadmon to fragment along ideological and political lines. The tensions fuel, and are fuelled by, unhealthy levels of paranoia, and fostered by interest groups that wish to keep tensions running high. Witch hunts for “undesirables” are common; show trials to purge traitors—real or otherwise—are a form of popular entertainment; youth counter-culture has become increasingly dissatisfied and rebellious across the board, and with it, crack-downs by the authorities have increased in both frequency and intensity.

**Language, Culture and Religion:** The Pact of Steel is composed mainly of Euroslavic and English speakers. There is no state religion, but the majority of Pact citizens adhere to a militant Protestant ethos which is often stoked to a frenzy by government propaganda. This often creates a very stark black-and-white worldview which is useful for creating a wide consensus among citizens for whatever the government policy being enacted.

The Progressive Empire's ruling caste speaks Mandalay, while the majority of commoners speak Indic or Hispanic. The Empire prides itself on the diversity of religions and cultures that exist in its borders. This is touted as a triumph of its culture, and this plurality is encouraged, so long as no one criticizes the government.

The United Workers Republic is officially atheist, and has been known to exile activist clergymen of various faiths to gulags for their anti-government activities (real or concocted). The main language of the UWR is English, though some French and Mandalay is spoken, especially among the elites.

### PLACES OF NOTE

#### *PACT OF STEEL*

Most of the southern continent of Hegolurra is dominated by a single polity, the authoritarian, militaristic “democracy” known as the Pact of Steel. The Pact grew from a small alliance of industrial city states on the western side of the Bandura Mountains, into the largest state on Kadmon through an extended campaign of conquest that eventually brought all of the territory west of the Bandura Mountains under its control. In the last decade, the Pact of Steel marched eastward, and conquered the smaller, weaker kingdoms on the Great Southern Steppe. Before this conquest, the Pact’s population was 60 million people. It has added another five million to that in the past ten years, much of it nomadic steppe-dwellers.

The Pact of Steel is considered the dominant military and economic power on Kadmon. This claim is backed up by a well-developed, fully mechanized TL3 army, and a large, if lower-tech, heavy air force used primarily in ground-support roles. The Pact’s navy is small and littoral, with limited ability to project power. Currently, the Pact’s military has been kept busy pacifying revolts and a low-level insurrection among the agricultural and nomadic people of the Steppe. Politically, the Pact of Steel is a republican democracy, though the military has been the dominant institution of the Pact since its inception. This militarism has shaped politics toward all-or-nothing, us-or-them, chauvenist attitudes among the populace, though the leadership generally has a more realistic, if ambitious, outlook.

The Pact has a massive industrial base located in the western part of the state. Its agricultural output is low for a country of its size, so the Pact of Steel relies on trade, especially food imports from the island Kingdom of Ramiza just to the north, to feed its populace. The Pact is also reliant on off-shore oil shipments from the Duchy of Palawan, in the North Sea. The Pact has some domestic oil production capability, but it will take another ten to twenty years for new oil infrastructure to be built on the Southern Steppes.



**Issues:** The Pact of Steel is currently trying to suppress a growing insurrection in the Southern Steppes. This revolt has been ongoing after the Pact's military initiated a brutal occupation. Intelligence experts are increasingly convinced that foreign agents are involved in supplying and training the insurgents. So far, no actionable evidence has been discovered, but there are only two possible culprits: the United Workers Republic, and the Progressive Empire. Beyond the insurgency, the Pact is desperately trying to modernize its navy and air force, which recently suffered a humiliating defeat in a skirmish with aircraft from the Progressive Imperial Air Force. Most importantly, the Pact of Steel has begun a top secret nuclear weapons development program, though it lacks much of the raw fissile material and technical know-how required for even a rudimentary device. The Karta Trading League is offering this know-how in exchange for a trading alliance and future considerations once the Pact of Steel uses its nuclear arsenal to bully its rivals into submission.

**Cities:** Jaxon (capital), Hamilton, Lagos, Messina, Danzig, Fortune, Lille, Dover, Colbourn, Danzig, Pashton, Hazia, Tybur.

### *UNITED WORKERS REPUBLIC*

The UWR is a communist state that has expanded to occupy much of the northern continent of Ipar Land in the last thirty years. Originally a revolutionary communist movement that overthrew the Grand Duchy of Khatanga, the UWR has become a massive industrial/agrarian state that conquered its neighbors and solidified control over Ipar Land. This caused all sorts of consternation among the other powers on Kadmon, until the UWR publicly declared that it was not interested in exporting its revolution beyond its borders further south, so long as no other polity sought to destabilize or attack it. The subsequent Middle Treaty between the three large powers has kept a cold war style peace for the past few decades.

The UWR follows a refined communist ideology that attempts to alleviate the worst aspects of command economies: corruption, redundancy, and lack of entrepreneurial spirit. It only partially succeeds; much of the UWR's communist social policies fail due to the same deficiencies inherent to both command economies and human nature that have hamstrung all the various communist societies that have popped up in history. In agriculture, however, the UWR is the leading food producer on the planet. Its 40 million people are proud of their advanced agricultural sciences, high yield harvests, and innovative agricultural research facilities. The UWR is also an industrial powerhouse, despite efficiency problems. The state is blessed with a wide range of natural resources, fresh water and hydro-electric power. Its citizens are well-cared for, though the standard of living is not as high, nor is wealth as evenly distributed, as the UWR claims it is.



The UWR military, the Workers' Armed Forces, are as modern as could be expected. The air force is particularly powerful, though low-tech, and the army is exceptionally well-staffed and powerfully equipped with all sorts of TL3 weaponry. The UWR navy is also powerful, though its best ships are a generation behind the most modern designs of other nations. The UWR has only one aircraft carrier, and focuses its wet-navy construction on small, fast gunships. The UWR is currently not fighting any open wars. The Workers' Revolt that resulted in the founding of the Republic, followed by the War of Liberation (what the UWR calls its conquest of Ipar Land), was the UWR's last major conflict. Skirmishes with the other major powers have occurred, especially by mercenary proxy, or unofficially. In these flare-ups, the UWR does not usually come out any worse or better than anyone else.

Strict rationing, censorship and a great deal of government-sponsored "cultural hygiene activities" in the UWR have, unsurprisingly, created a particularly large youth counter-culture movement in the cities and larger agro-communes across the nation. This youth counter-culture, *Les Jetons* in the French dialect common in the working-class towns across the UWR, is currently the most expansive on Kadmon, employing music, poetry and other fine arts to create a very sophisticated, though still quite grassroots, critique of the establishment. Unfortunately, this movement has not gone unnoticed; quite a few young people have disappeared. The UWR government disavows exiling any of its citizens to a handful of camps in the Wastes for re-education or incarceration.

**Cities:** Langolei (Capital), Novo Gregor, Diru, Riva, Negua, Uzad, Urvatzer, Zerua, Sklabo, Elurz, Beti

### **PROGRESSIVE EMPIRE**

The Island of Minos is home to the Progressive Empire, an old, decadent and powerful state that has its roots in the earliest days of the Deluge. The founders of the Empire, the crew of the bulk freighter *MV Progress*, were carrying a large supply of high tech colonial goods from the jump gate at Basajaun to Harribix (now Moloch). Realizing that the old social orders on Kadmon were no more, the captain, Jo'ao Limsinado, decided to conquer an entire continent and set himself and his crew up as nobles. The Progressive Empire has lasted since the early days of the Deluge, with a Limsinado descendant as Emperor, since then. The population of about 35 million is currently ruled by Empress Indra Limsinado II, who is 26 years old and the center of the universe in the Empire's culture. The descendants of the *Progress's* crew form the high nobility. A small merchant class serves as the driving engine of the economy, while the vast majority of the Empire's citizens are commoners.

The secret to the continued success of the Empire has been attributed to two major trends. The first is that the despotism of the Limsinado family has been, with a few exceptions, an enlightened one. Though certainly not a beacon of civil rights and democracy, the Limsinados have managed to avoid making many of the egregious errors that historically have led to the overthrow of tyrants. The second is that the Empire's religion is centered on their ruler. The Limsinado on the throne serves as an

avatar/prophet/high priest for the divine cult surrounding the Limsinado dynasty. Much more than lip service, this worship has ensured obedience, servitude, and social harmony. All religions are welcome in the Empire, so long as the word of the Empress is obeyed, and her persona is worshipped as a personification of the Empire itself.

The bulk of the Empire's population resides on the continent's coasts. This leaves much of Minos' interior unknown, or at least uninhabited. The commoners have a vibrant native culture, and are exceptional sailors, athletes and soldiers. Many are quite loyal to the government and the Empress, and those who are not keep very quiet, are imprisoned, or escape into the hinterlands of Minos' jungles.

After centuries of isolation, the Empire has recently become much more involved in world affairs. This is due to renewed interest in global development among the nobility, as well as reports that much of Kadmon has been conquered by other states. As a result, the Progressive Empire is shoring up its defenses and has modernized its economy as much as possible. The mining and industry sectors are experiencing major growth, and rail lines are being built to link the major urban centers on Minos. Although much of the Empire is still underdeveloped, there are so many opportunities on Minos that court economists have predicted that growth can be sustained for at least two decades.

The Progressive Empire's military is a polyglot. The army consists of local militias, conscript formations, and elite units. The air force is new, and growing with the aid of foreign military and technical advisors. However, the Imperial Navy is considered the most effective fleet on the planet. The Limsinado dynasty has insisted on retaining a powerful, professional navy as the first line of defense. A massive fleet engagement might find the Imperial Navy undergunned against the Pact of Steel's battleships, but the Imperial Submarine fleet would exact a heavy toll regardless. Smaller, faster naval vessels are preferred by the Imperial Navy, though the three small aircraft carriers employing high-tech vectored thrust aircraft are the pride of the fleet.

**The Secret:** The Progressive Empire and its military have a major technological advantage. The Limsinado dynasty and the nobility of the Empire actually comprise a technological tyranny on Minos. The *MV Progress* was left to burn up in Kadmon's atmosphere, but not before every stitch of technology was salvaged from its holds and its workings. The result is that the Empire has access to pretech medical technology, as well as some pretech military technology. This allows the Empire to punch far above its weight. This technology is considered top secret, and is always wrapped up in the divinity cult surrounding the Limsinado family. The relics are strictly controlled by the private Imperial Guards, who are sworn defenders of the Limsinado family, and answer only to the Empress.

**Cities:** Jo'ao (capital), Melita, Jokatz, Sophiz, Siobhan, Darj, Oribach, Urheimat, Kastaman

### *PALAWAN*

The island nation of Palawan numbers some 1 million individuals. Located in the middle of the North Sea, this small federation of towns and agricultural provinces is constantly squeezed by the three superpowers. Palawan's leaders have danced a careful ballet of neutrality over the past fifty years, but in the last decade the political climate has grown increasingly hostile. The superpowers are demanding that Palawan throw in its lot with one of them. Pundits agree that if this decision is ever made, a global war will be the result. The Palawans are cynical about their prospects, and worry that regardless of what they do, their island will be invaded and decimated in the fighting. They are not wrong: Palawan is home to some of the largest petrochemical reserves on the planet. **Cities:** Alva (100k), Ponca (25k), Dumas (20k). Climate: temperate and boreal, with rolling grasslands and lots of rain. Palawan is a fairly habitable piece of real estate.

### *INGMAR REPUBLIC*

The War of Liberation that brought about the United Workers Republic had winners and losers. The Ingmar Republic is the remnant of the most powerful capitalist and feudal states, amalgamated into one fractious, discontent and tyrannical entity crowded into the eastern peninsula of Ipar Land. The Ingmar Republic is a republic in name only: a mixed oligarchy of capitalists, military men, and deposed nobility rule the territory and the population of about one million unfortunates with impunity. Behind their heavily fortified borders, they scheme and plot to retake their former glory, and act as a thorn in the side of the UWR. The Republic's subversive activities, unfettered militarism, and deeply classist social order are, in effect, the perfect propaganda machine for the UWR's communist regime. The UWR need only point to the Ingmar Republic's incessant stream of revanchist rhetoric to justify its continued militarism and austerity measures. Much of the Ingmar Republic's economy is devoted to mining, extracting and processing ores from the Ingmar Mountains. The population is semi-rural, living in small company towns where they are employed in mining and processing enterprises. The Ingmar military is fairly weak, though more than capable of stopping all but the most determined invader. The Republic's mountainous terrain is a major force multiplier, and border skirmishes with the UWR are common. The Republic also gets less-than-covert support from the other powers on Kadmon, much to the chagrin of the UWR's diplomatic corps. **Cities:** San Isabel (165000), Vladivostok (50000)

### *KINGDOM OF RAMIZA*

Located on a large island just north of the Pact of Steel is the wealthy Kingdom of Ramiza. Established before the Deluge as a voluntary social experiment in return-to-the-land technocratic agrarian feudalism, the Kingdom weathered the worst of the Deluge well enough, and is now a fully-fledged constitutional monarchy with longstanding traditions. The main economic activities here are fishing and farming, with some industrial and high-tech research going on in the capital city of Concord. Ramiza has extensive trading ties with the Pact of Steel, and is actually one of the main exporters of wheat and other grains to the superpower. This has given the Ramizans a great deal of leverage in international affairs. Total population: 500k. **Cities:** Concord (150k), Bristol (50k), Vacovilha (50k)

### *NICOBARIA*

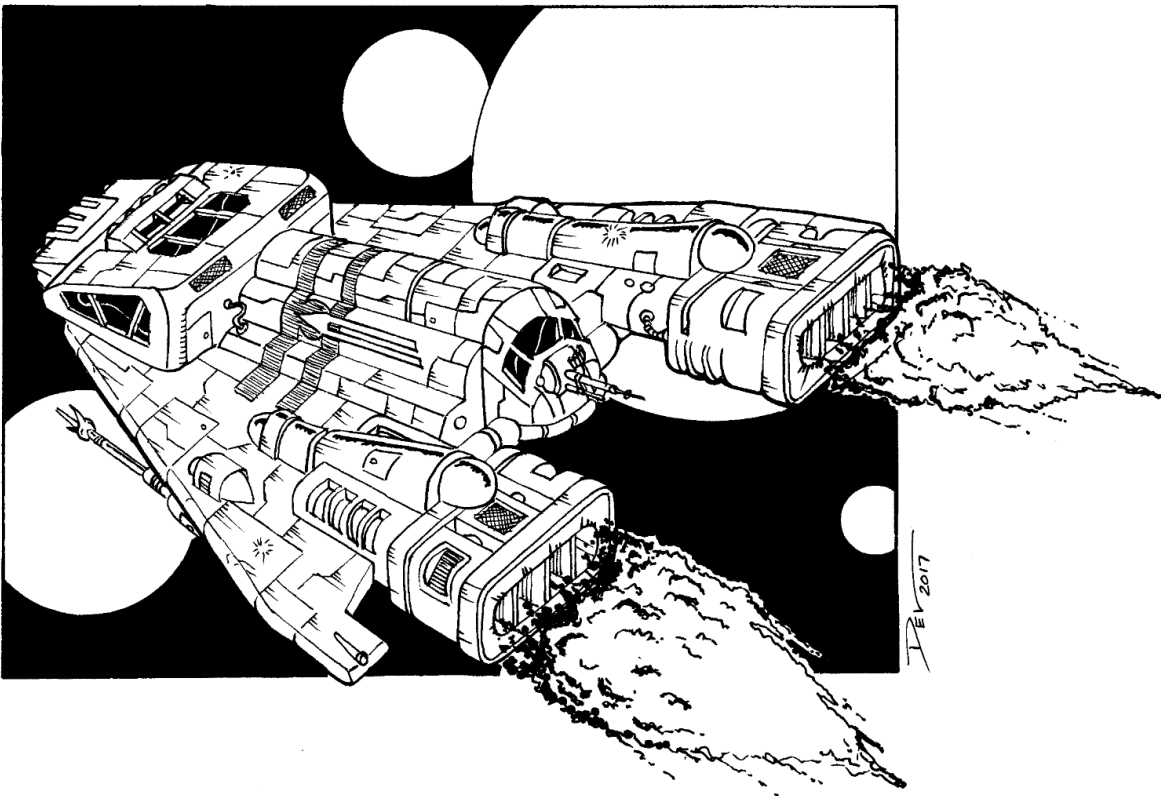
This is a sparsely populated island with large amounts of oil deposits, making it of prime strategic importance to all the nations of Kadmon. Bilha (15000) and Krilm (10000) are resource extraction colonies of the Pact of Steel and the Progressive Empire, respectively. Most political pundits on Kadmon predict that the island of Nicobar will be a source of conflict until local technology outgrows fossil fuel technology. Until then, unfortunately, Nicobar will be the focus of many machinations between the great powers.

### *CAMROSAN OBSERVATION TEAM OMICRON*

Kadmon was recognized as a society ripe for maturation and salvation, according to the Department of Psychohistory of the Hierarchate Intelligence Strategic Planning Office on Camros, beyond the LTC to Coreward-Trailing. A small team of twenty-four scientists, spies and media specialists were inserted into Kadmonan society over the past ten years. These operatives are scattered across the globe, and are tasked with monitoring, manipulating and promoting a narrative of returning to interstellar civilization, and the diplomatic resolution of local tensions. Observation Team Omicron's goal is to form some sort of international consortium among the political elite of Kadmon, and begin re-establishing interstellar contact. The Camrosans' efforts are stymied by the fact that tensions are running at an all-time high, and the manipulations they are quietly enacting are often rejected by the unhealthy levels of paranoia within Kadmonan society. The Camrosans are also alarmed and dismayed by the Karta Trading League's aggressive and troublesome meddling. They have not interfered, however, as Hierarchate Intelligence's presence on the planet is still unknown to the KTL. The Camrosan operatives on planet are a lonely group, and may work with others if they feel that they can be trusted to advance the Hierarchate's goals.

### KARTA TRADING LEAGUE DELEGATION

The KTL has made some high-level, top secret diplomatic contacts with all three of the major powers on the planet. The KTL's goal is entirely profit-based, mainly because of the particularly greedy and amoral approach the delegation head Eduwa Ukim has taken to the planet: war profiteering is the order of the day. The Karta Trading League is determined to make huge profits off of the coming global war on Kadmon, regardless of the outcome, and has been funding all sides clandestinely. When KTL merchants are busy selling tank plans to the Pact of Steel, they also secretly provide anti-tank weaponry to the Progressive Empire. All factions on Kadmon are buying up coveted and valuable postech supplies that the KTL offers in frustratingly small amounts. The KTL is constantly awarded supply contracts to outfit Kadmon's armies, and is very careful to maintain its neutrality—at least publicly. Eduwa Ukim's most ambitious project is the very delicate negotiations with the Pact of Steel for rudimentary TL3 nuclear weapons technology. Ukim wishes to transfer this technology to the Pact of Steel, in exchange for long-term trade monopolies for the KTL once the Pact of Steel uses the threat of nuclear warfare to dominate its enemies. The KTL leadership on Prime Station is unaware of this plan. Ukim hopes to present his bosses on the KTL Board of Directors (*LTC1 17*) with a *fait accompli*, overriding any of the very valid concerns the Directors would have regarding supplying weapons of mass destruction to a lower-tech world.



DEL

### SIFTAN

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars
0606	Siftan	Breathable	Warm	Miscible	Remnant	0	1	G8V M2V

**Tags:** Badlands World, Tomb World

A once-prosperous colony world, Siftan had millions of inhabitants. Then the Deluge came, and the entire planet descended into an orgy of violence and destruction. Those who could escape did. Most did not. Eventually all that was left were ruins of once splendid cities, cracked and desolate earth, and the bones of the dead. The local biosphere is slowly reclaiming the ruins, but so much damage has been done to the planetary ecosystem that it has been fundamentally altered for the worse. Any survivors have regressed to a feral state, and have not been heard from in 600 years.

### D'BANSA

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars
0606	D'Bansa	Breathable	Cold-Temp	Miscible	Remnants	0	1	G8V M2V

**Tags:** Radioactive World, Tomb World

Much like Siftan, this once prosperous settlement tore itself apart during the early times of the Deluge. Unfortunately, nuclear weapons were used in the wars that ended society here. The result was a nuclear winter which has killed all but the hardiest native flora and fauna. Any human survivors here have gone feral and live in perpetual fear of radiation poisoning (though they do not know it as such).

### VANTH

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars
1003	Vanth	Breathable	Temperate	Hybrid	600k	1	5	K3V M4V

**Tags:** Oceanic World, Restrictive Laws

**Enemies:** A mob of outraged citizens who witnessed the PCs breaking the Compact. *Keeper Johannes Achen*, who investigates, arrests, and prosecutes dangerous criminals like the PCs. *Amoral Gure Gauza slavers*, who regularly prey on small fishing villages and islands on this world. The Vanthian Shark, a shark-like predator that hunts in small packs in the Gyre.

**Friends:** *Elder Vorhides*, of the sea-salvage people that have survived exile. *Maria Tritt*, a fisherwoman and trader in Lunenport. *Keeper Liana Nordau*, a powerful Keeper who secretly harbours heretical ideas of Compact reform.

**Complications:** A water filtration system in Lunenport breaks down. The PCs break the Compact quickly, and repeatedly! The Compact's regulations are somewhat contextual, and what the PCs thought was permitted in one situation is actually forbidden in another. A stormfront or even a tsunami hits while the PCs are adrift at sea. Postech gravitic ship drives don't work so well over much of the deep ocean of the Gyre.

**Things:** Pre/post-tech water purification equipment under heavy guard. The Compact, now in pocket-sized format! A crashed spacecraft in the shallows containing a small fortune in its sealed cargo hold. The Elixir, a pretech DNA modification treatment that allows one to develop enzymes that will digest the native life here. It is highly prized, and often used as a reward for good service to the Compact/Keepers. The raw materials required to make Elixir. A Writ of Assent, which allows its wielder to break the Compact in extenuating circumstances.

**Places:** At sea on a storm-swept ship. A jail cell in a small town, waiting for a Keeper to pronounce sentencing. A Lunenport courtroom with an angry mob right outside. A tundra-covered tiny atoll in the middle of the shallows. A ruined semi-submerged settlement, half on a cliff-side, and half underwater.

**Trade:** Low-Tech Ocean World

Goods	Type	Cost
1 Processed fish and krill	Agricultural, Low tech	500
2 Exotic Caviars	Luxury, Low tech, Compact	10000
3 Housewares, Basic	Low Tech, Consumer	2000
4 Tools, Basic Hand Tools	Low Tech, Tool	5000
5 Drugs, Raw Materials	Agriculture, Biotech, Bulky	2000
6 Metawheat	Agricultural, Low Tech	500
7 Slaves	Sapient	25000
8 Seaweed, refined (cakes and rations)	Agricultural, Low tech	500
9 Native Artwork	Cultural, Luxury	10000
10 Clothing, Common	Common, Low Tech, Cultural	1000

**Friction:** 4

**Supply and Demand:** -2 Agricultural, -1 Livestock, +2 Postech, +1 Tools, +1 Medical

**Trouble:** 5, as Tyranny or Primitive World.

**Notes:** Vanth is a tyrannically ruled primitive world, where strict adherence to the Compact gets in the way of much trading. This is the intention of the Keepers, who understand that if the masses were to gain technological advantage over their rulers, the current social order would topple. Traders are much more likely to find success in Shelburn, and Yarmouth. Note, there is no starport on the planet: refuelling must be done via fuel scoops. Slavery is not legal on Vanth, but, occasionally, convicted criminals are imprisoned and offered to those interstellar merchants willing to trade in slaves.

**Fleet Build Points:** 5. The TL1 society on Vanth is not able to contribute much to an interstellar space fleet. The Vanthians are slightly more advanced in water filtration technologies, but even then, barely rate TL2.

**Vanth Fleet:** None. The humans on Vanth belong to a TL1 society that is a long way off from cannibalizing starships. A number of wrecks lie at the bottom of the ocean here on Vanth. The cost of the salvage operation required to bring a wreck up off the ocean floor is prohibitive enough to prevent most salvagers from attempting such a feat.



### SYSTEM OVERVIEW

This system is a crowded place. Huelo is a K-class orange star is orbited by a dozen planets: seven terrestrials (three in the habitable zone), five gas giants of various sizes, a rich and dense asteroid belt that has not been exploited, and a distant binary red dwarf named Mischief. Huelo is bright and warm enough that Vanth is far enough away to not be tidally locked, and the other two habitable zone planets are also somewhat viable for colonization.

Occupied Orbits	
0	Heulo (K3V)
1	Pinto (Tiny, molten)
2	Spek (Small, airless)
3	Urbos (Medium size, Thick, Warm, Microbial)
4	Vanth (Moon: Leor)
5	Izur (Medium size, Thin, Cold, <i>Engineered biosphere</i> )
6	Asteroid Belt (Very rich, dense)
7	Moridon (GG, 8 moons, ring)
8	Hardozkor (Small, airless)
9	Kilardon (GG, 19 moons)
10	Faith (GG 12 moons)
11	Hope (GG, 14 moons, rings)
12	Charity (GG, plethora of debris)
16	Mischief (M4V)

### PLANETARY OVERVIEW

Vanth is a water-covered world with a highly complex biosphere. Most of the life forms here are aquatic, with only a handful of flying or terrestrial species inhabiting the islands and atolls. Most of the native aquatic life is incompatible with human biochemistry. However, human-edible species inhabit the land masses (such as they are). The ocean water on Vanth is non-potable salt water and needs to be filtered for human consumption. Many highly evolved life forms fill the seas, some of which were selectively modified for human consumption by Terran scientists before the Deluge. The diversity present in the coral reefs and other shallows on Vanth would be a treasure trove for a marine biologist.

The planet's large islands are called collectively called The Isles. They are home to the vast majority of Vanth's human population, and are hospitable enough after nearly seven centuries of habitation. The world also has a vast array of tiny atolls dotting the globe. Much of Vanth's oceans are particularly shallow, and the planet is also subjected to significant tidal forces due to the moon Leor's close proximity and size. Thus, during certain months, some of the shallower parts of the oceans recede, and new lands are claimed temporarily for intensive farming, wherever biochemistry permits. Vanth's seasonal variation is very minor, with only a five degree change off the 28 degree average temperature. The days are 28 hours long, and it takes the planet 349 local days to orbit its star.

### SOCIETAL OVERVIEW

The largest land mass is the island Byornholm, home to the only major permanent human settlement: a city of roughly 160000 souls called Lunenport. A technocratic feudal society exists on Byornholm; the Deluge forced this society to abandon heavy industry, and focus on surviving in the alien environment. An agrarian society has developed: the ruling caste maintains the ancient water filtration systems, while the vast majority of the citizens engage in fishing or farming. This arrangement has been successful for nearly 600 years due to the Compact, a rigid code of strict laws that ensures the greater community's survival at all costs. Breaching the Compact can result in heavy fines, imprisonment, or even exile on the high seas—death.

The rulers of Lunenport and the smaller communities on Byornholm are a semi-religious technocratic oligarchy called the Keepers, led by the High Keeper. Whatever democratic/survivalistic motives that originally drove the inhabitants of Vanth to draft up the Compact have long been lost to the realities of social and technological collapse on the Isles. The rules of the Compact are designed to maintain order and keep humans alive on Vanth in the face of enormous difficulties. The Keepers take their job seriously, but after 600 years of the Deluge, preserving their political power is as much a goal of the Keepers as preserving human life on Vanth. The Vanthians lead lives of drudgery and toil, while being constantly scrutinized and surveilled by the Keepers, who are priests, inquisitors, judges and executioners all rolled up into one. The Keepers are the only ones who are at all capable of maintaining the precious enzyme production equipment—tailored anti-allergens—that keeps Vanthians able to digest native-grown food. Every month, each Vanthian is provided with a ration of anti-allergens which allow him or her to digest local food. The groundwater usually also requires filtration; the Keepers run the ancient water filtration machines as well.

Vanthian technology is roughly equivalent to that of late-Renaissance Earth. Urban centers are messy, disorganized and unsanitary. Technology is muscle, wind, or water powered. The average Vanthian lifespan is about 45 years, after accounting for the infant mortality rate (which is high). Sailing vessels are particularly well-designed, and are more comparable to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century schooners than to older Renaissance-era caravels. The Vanthians are also well-adapted to aquacultural practices: they have extensive kelp and fish farms in the shallows that they maintain to feed their population. The Keepers instruct everyone on proper cooking and cleaning of all foodstuffs, to minimize exposure to toxic native allergens.

**The Elixir.** This advanced brew of anti-allergen enzymes and other high-tech compounds is manufactured by a very old pretech machine that the Keepers maintain in absolute secrecy. Elixir, when ingested, will provide total compatibility to local life and the water on Vanth for a month. When it is taken intravenously every day for a week, the Elixir will last for decades, or permanently—no one on Vanth is certain. Naturally, the Keepers are *very* judicious in their dispensing of Elixir.

Only Keepers are permitted direct access to the chemical compound, and only the highest levels of the organization understand its proper use and have injected it. Were this secret to come to light, it would lead to scandal and total revolt. The Keepers are known to dispense extra rations of the Elixir as a reward for good citizenship. It is also worth mentioning that basic TL4 anti-allergens will function as well as the Elixir, though they must be ingested almost daily, to protect humans from the local environment. This does mean that should someone (read: player characters) supply the local Vanthians with substantial amounts of anti-allergens, or the means to produce them cheaply, they will be, in effect, fomenting open revolution against the Keepers and the Compact.

**Language, Culture and Religion:** Vanthians speak English and Hispanic, with small pockets of Euroslavic and French also present. The main religion on Vanth is Compactism, which venerates the document itself and the Keepers who preserve life and the social order. Heresy is thus tantamount to political rebellion, and the few underground Christian, Jewish, and Muslim preachers who keep the hope of a better political order alive do so at great personal risk.

**The Compact:** This legal code is responsible for humanity's survival on Vanth, but it is also responsible for the brutal, feudal, stagnant, and superstitious nature of Vanthian society. Nearly every aspect of human behavior is addressed and legislated in the Compact. Its drafters were primarily concerned with producing an orderly, stable society that would be able to survive the perilous situation it was in as the Deluge began. The Compact covers everything: food and water are strictly rationed, even during strong harvests. Rules governing sexual relations, familial disputes, haggling, tipping, bartering, marriage proposals, slander and libel, as well as more esoteric situations, are all treated in excessive detail. This bewildering legal system has resulted in a population cowed into submission by the Keepers of the Compact, who themselves are barely more knowledgeable about the legal codex than the peasants they rule. The general population is highly conformist, deeply superstitious, and know their place. The Keepers are, by and large, severe, paternalistic, and do their best to promote an aura of terror as they go about their business among the people.





## **NOTABLE PLACES**

### ***LUNENPORT***

The largest settlement on Vanth, Lunenport is home to 160,000 souls. The main industries in Lunenport are shipping, ship-building, fish farming, and other aquaculture. Lunenport is also home to the largest Keeper Tower: a massive, fortified edifice that looms over the city, and extends deep into the ground. The High Keeper resides here, and his mystical incantations and pious blessings supposedly provide Lunenporters with their prosperity. Most importantly, the High Keeper has the requisite knowledge of the pretech purification machinery codes to properly ensure their continued functioning. Lunenporters are a timid and conservative lot. They have little going for them: their city is a filthy, sweltering, crowded armpit in the middle of The Isles. There are limited varieties of local edible plants and animals, and while the fishery is thriving, there are not many species of edible fish that spawn near the city. The result is an unhappy, resentful place where people cling to the Compact as their only means of survival.

### *SHELURN*

This town of 80,000 people is located on the western edge of the main Isle of Byornhym. Shelburn is an important town because it is home to the largest shipwrighting guild-family on Vanth, the Ashdons. This extended family has gradually established themselves as the premiere ship builders in the Isles, much to the chagrin of the Keepers and other shipwrights in Lunenport. This has given Shelburn residents something of an independent streak. The locals are faithful to the Compact, but they are (slightly) less strict in its interpretation, and more willing to trade freely with outsiders. The Shelburnians are also eager to gain access to new technology in order to maintain their dominance in shipbuilding.

### *THE FAR SHALLOWS*

Not everyone on Vanth lives on the Isles. The other inhabitants of this planet are the “Whalers”, the nomadic sailing fishers and hunters of larger edible aquatic life. The Whalers can be found everywhere on the planet, but they are most common in the Vanthian Southern Ocean known as the Far Shallows. Comprised of tidal islands and other temporary land that disappears and reappears according to the exertions of the moon Leor’s tides on Vanth, the Far Shallows are a haven for those who are unwilling, or unable, to live under the Keepers’ watchful eyes and the Compact’s harsh regulations. In addition to colourful nomads, the Far Shallows are home to a plethora of undersea aquatic life, some of it edible, some of it hostile, all of it beautiful. The denizens of the Shallows have various means of purifying water for drinking, some more successful than others. During the Low Tide Season, the Far Shallows becomes the site of temporary agriculture as the residents here scramble to plant and harvest fast-growing strains of metawheat, as well as whatever edible plant life remains on the temporary sand bars.

### *YARMOUTH*

To call Yarmouth a floating city is to engage in some hyperbole. However, enough rafts, boats and barges have been lashed together in the Far Shallows to certainly provide some semblance of an urban environment. No more than a few thousand people ever reside in Yarmouth, and the “city” is constantly changing as boats arrive and depart. Many of Yarmouth’s permanent residents were once exiled from Lunenport and the Isles after being caught breaking the Compact, and miraculously survived their banishment. The most important locale in all of Yarmouth is the purification plant: an ancient floating barge made of metals and other higher-tech materials, which houses a large pretech mobile water purifier. The existence of this device is a secret, and its daily use is limited only to emergencies. However, large stores of potable water are hidden in locations on the bottom of the Far Shallows. Interestingly, most of the people of Yarmouth have developed tricks to survive without their monthly ration of anti-allergens, and they are very wary when dealing with unknown substances and foodstuffs.

**Vanthian Shark:** this underwater hunter is a terror for local fishermen and anyone who is lost at sea. These creatures attack in packs, and are attracted by flashing objects. The Vanthian Shark looks like a cross between a thin manta-ray and a shark, and fully-grown specimens are roughly two meters long.

<b>Vanthian Shark</b>			
Armor Class	14 (17 when attacked from above water)	No. Appearing	3d4
Hit Dice	3	Saving Throw	13
Attack Bonus	+4	Movement	15 (in water)
Damage	1d8 bite	Morale	11

**Leviathan:** A legendary and terrifying creature among the local fishermen, the leviathan is a rare deep-sea organism that occasionally will attack large boats that venture too close to the Gyre. This is the only truly deep part of the Vanthian ocean, and not much is known about the life forms that make their home in the Gyre’s depths. The leviathan will make short work of most TL1 boats, and may cause significant damage against higher-tech vessels as well.

<b>Leviathan</b>			
Armor Class	13	No. Appearing	1
Hit Dice	9	Saving Throw	10
Attack Bonus	+8	Movement	10 (in water)
Damage	1d12 bite, 3d6 ram	Morale	9

**IZUR**

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars
<b>1003</b>	Izur	Thin	Cold	Engineered	200k	4	5	K3V M4V

**Tags:** Sealed Menace, Alien Ruins

The Vanth system has a couple of major attractions besides the mainworld. Of particular note is the fifth planet, Izur, the biosphere of which was engineered to be perfect for habitation by an alien species known as the Euto-Eutu. No one has set foot upon Izur and survived in the last six hundred years. The planet does not appear on any modern records, but might be found in a particularly well-stocked Flame of Prometheus. No one has done a full survey of the Vanth system, and no one has set foot on Izur in centuries. Whatever exists on the planet is certainly a mystery. The Vanthians are convinced that Izur is a bad omen when it rises in certain locations in the sky, in certain times of the year.

The presence of a small alien ruin above ground on Izur leads to a much larger subterranean complex. Millenia ago the Euto-Eutu had established a prison colony of exiles on Izur (see adventure #13, below). The Euto-Eutu have since vanished, and all memory of the colony/prison have long since vanished. The Euto-Eutu have survived in suspended animation in their colony-prison for eons. The Deluge, however, woke some of them. The Euto-Eutu might become powerful enough to pose a significant threat to the Lurian Trailing Cluster.

**BYALSTOK**

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars
1004	Byalstok	Thick	Temp-Warm	Hybrid	1 million	4-	2	G7V BD

**Tags:** Heavy Mining, Freak Weather

**Enemies:** *Lars Kurn*, a mining speculator with dark ambitions. He dominates much of the Turov Magnate, operating behind the scenes. *Faye Lochside*, one of the administrators of the main habitat tower at Kabryn. She is also an Order of Lazarus (*LTC1 20*) agent trying to uncover the secret Camrosan Hierarchate Intelligence presence on the planet. KTL Factor *Mardsen Pilloy*, who is suspicious of any other KTL merchants who would interfere with his operation, and is downright hostile to non-KTL traders.

**Friends:** *3<sup>rd</sup> Preceptor Ariaka Johns*, a Camrosan Hierarchate meteorologist with a funding grant, and a project. *Phelip Williams*, a local ore magnate looking to establish trading contacts based out of Lida. *Kiko Ptolemy*, the head of the Miners Union in Kabryn, and a thorn in the side of any Magnate.

**Complications:** The perfect storm, and the PCs are out in it. A mine collapse! The mining/smelting equipment breaks down in the hard weather. A nasty silicate-based myconic life form begins forming in the miners' lungs. The storm walls of a large settlement are not functioning, and a storm is coming fast!

**Things:** Prospecting tubes containing evidence of a lucrative find, but are they real? Naturally occurring sandstone formations that are quite stunning and the tell-tale sign of a valuable mineral deposit. A malfunctioning weather satellite that crashed in the highlands. The data contained in its memory banks is very valuable. Evidence of a payoff between the Turov Magnate and the KTL. Should it get out, it would upset the coalition in the Magnate Council and cause all sorts of political and economic instability.

**Places:** A smuggler's cache in an old mine, hidden by the monsoon. A huge, stinking, and hellish smelting complex in a habitat tower. The KTL station/compound in Kabryn, where deals are made and corruption is brewing. A massive surface strip mine, where all sorts of accidents can happen in the rough weather.

### Trade: Resource Extraction World

Goods	Type	Cost
1 Colonial Survival Tools	Survival, Postech, Tools, Common	5000
2 Fine Liquor	Luxury, Low Tech, Compact	10000
3 Fusion Plants	Postech, Tools, Bulky	10000
4 Medical Supplies, Postech	Medical, Postech, Compact	25000
5 Metal Ingots, Rare	Mineral, Bulky, Rare	5000
6 Metal Ingots, Common	Mineral, Common, Bulky	1000
7 Exotic Jewels	Mineral, Luxury, Rare, Compact	25000
8 Postech Building Material	Tools, Postech, Bulky	10000
9 Tools, Industrial	Tools, Postech	10000
10 Housewares, Postech	Consumer, Postech	5000

**Friction:** 3

**Supply and Demand:** +2 Luxury, +1 Agricultural, -2 Minerals, -1 Tools

**Trouble:** 2, As Industrial World

**Notes:** Byalstok is a rough-and-tumble high tech mining world with a burgeoning population and a very pragmatic culture. They are looking for contracts and long-term deals for major development and investment, but are nobody's fools. The Magnates do their part to facilitate trade, but this naturally leads to more meddling and corruption.

**Fleet Build Points:** 150. The industrial capacity of this world is matched only by its rich raw materials available for shipbuilding. However, Byalstok's small population limits the resources available for the development of a space industry.

**Byalstok Fleet:** The Magnates have very few ships at their disposal, and of those, only one—a mining vessel that never leaves the system—is equipped with a spike drive. The rest are slow system ships in orbit around Byalstok that are used to house small zero gravity factories for planetary industry. Byalstok is capable of cannibalizing wrecks to build a vessel capable of Spike-1, but none have been constructed in the past century. With the Karta Trading League, Camrosans and the Lurians making contact with the planet, it is only a matter of time before the Magnates begin an extensive shipbuilding program.



### SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Velyka Zirka is the main star in the system, and is particularly large for a main sequence star. Karlyk, a brown dwarf orbits just past the habitable zone, and is the cause of many strange tidal and electromagnetic effects on the other planetary bodies. Byalstok system was once a growing economic concern, but the position of the terrestrial rockballs that provided much of the heavy industrial output were deemed too impractical for long-term exploitation. This has changed since the end of the Deluge, as the Karta Trading League and the Camrosans are beginning to look for cheaper sources of industrial raw materials.

Occupied Orbits	
0	Velyka Zirka (G7V)
1	Kamina (Tiny Molten Rockball)
2	Areshnivin (Medium sized Rockball, Corrosive Atmosphere)
3	Vidmov (Large Rockball)
4	Byalstok (2 moons)
5	Rabalk (Rockball, thin atmosphere, 3 moons, polar ice)
6	Karlyk (BD)
7	Demetra (GG, 19 moons)
8	Afina (GG, rings)
9	Peklo (Small, Frozen)

### PLANETARY OVERVIEW

Byalstok is a harsh world of stark beauty and contrasts. The weather here is harsh and unpredictable. This is due in part to the planetary axial tilt, which at 35 degrees generates large temperature changes between seasons. As well, the greenhouse effect caused by Byalstock's thick atmosphere contributes to the severity of storms. The days on Byalstok are 30 hours long, and one year is 402 local days. Byalstok is blessed with expansive oceans of non-potable water, and the local life is aggressive and hungry: Byalstok is a challenge for even the most hardy of settlers. Freak electrical storms are common, often accompanied by high winds and tornados. All the settlements on this world are semi-submerged and equipped with massive storm doors to maximize protection. Still, the threat of a breached habitation tower is common enough to keep all inhabitants and visitors on their toes. Although much biodiversity exists on the planet, most of it is quite alien to humans. Before the Deluge, the colonists made many gains in taming the wilderness. New human-compatible species were introduced, and some long-term genetic engineering projects were being examined. These were all lost in the chaos of the Deluge, and Byalstok's native ecosystem has even reclaimed those settlements abandoned during the chaos. The million or so inhabitants of the planet are in a long, slow struggle to reclaim their homeworld.

Byalstok has a varied landscape. The northern hemisphere is dominated by a large saltwater sea called Solone Mor. This massive body of water is neighbored by Nevely Mor, a smaller saltwater sea. Together, these two seas take up roughly 20% of the planet's surface, and are home to a wide variety of underwater ecosystems. The Great Bay lies on the Western edge of the Solone Mor, and was the hub of human settlement before the Deluge. Today, only the settlement of Kabryn survives on the Great Bay's rocky shores.

The largest continent on Byalstok, Uscat, is dominated by the Bolsh Holmy Mountains, which stretch across the entire continent. There are numerous isolated ecosystems, varying from thick jungles to savannah plains and steppes, each lodged in the many valleys that cut through the mountains. Mining operations abound deep in the mountains. Some of which have long since been abandoned in the Deluge. The central landmass bounded by both ends of the Bolsh Holmy range is called the Ostcat Plains. The Plains are mainly savannah and swamplands, with a desert on the western edge bordering the Yukat Channel. This was the site of many pre-Deluge agricultural settlements that perished when civilization collapsed. It is now wholly reclaimed by Byalstok's native biosphere.

The southern hemisphere is made up of the Yuzhno and Kryshenko Mor seas, which are linked via the Yukat Channel. On either end of the Channel are massive canals that were dug to facilitate sea travel for shipping. The Yukat Channel's weather is remarkably calm for Byalstok. Unfortunately, the canals have fallen into disrepair and the Channel is now haven to pirates and bandits. Finally, the Southern Steppes are a cold and desolate tundra and taiga badland, with few inhabitants.

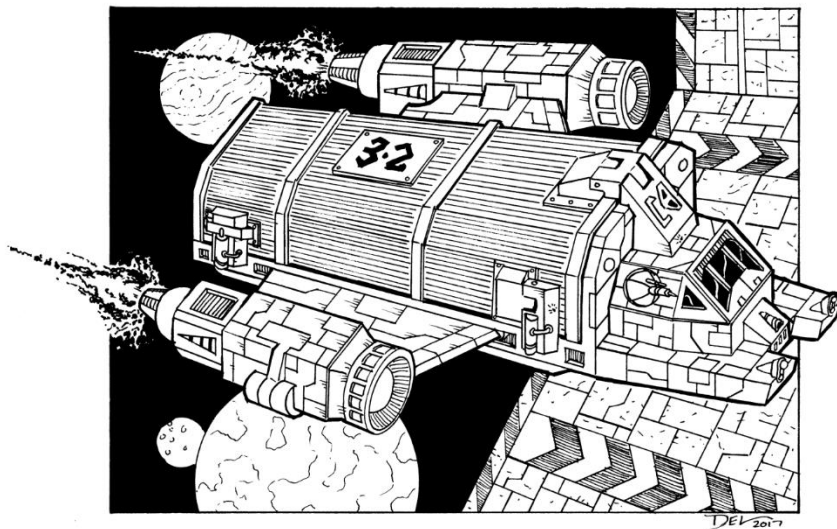
### **SOCIETAL OVERVIEW**

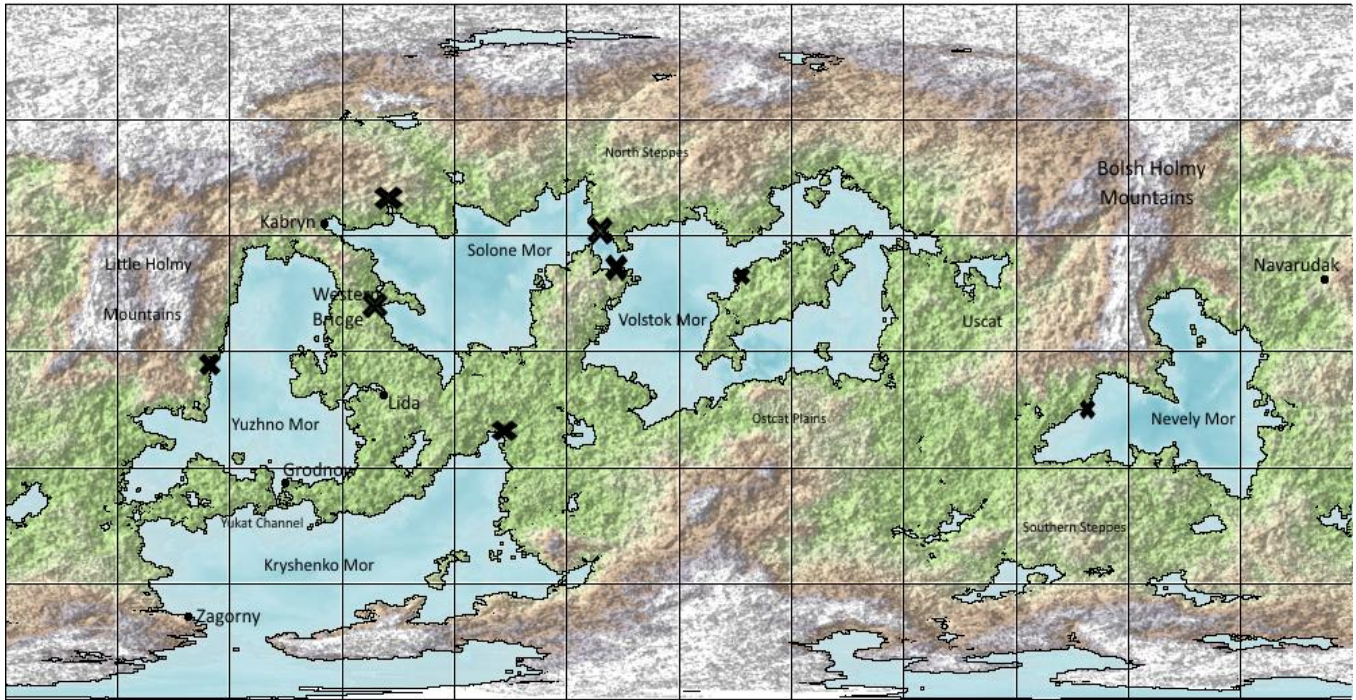
The hostile weather on Byalstok is a difficult obstacle for extensive human settlement, as it prevents metawheat from being grown and harvested in the wild. Thus, Byalstok's main industries are hydroponic gardening, carniculture, and mining. Much of this also goes on underground or underwater, to avoid the worst weather patterns. For much of the Deluge, the people of Byalstok huddled in their semi-enclosed habitat tower arcologies, eeking out an existence. Now that interstellar trade has resumed and the Byalans have access to off-world metawheat and other staples, they can turn their attentions to reclaiming their home. The humans on Byalstok are very eager to re-explore and re-tame their planet.

The main industry on Byalstok is heavy mining, and this is carried out in massive surface strip-mines, and underground operations with heavy machinery and some robot assistance. The majority of the mines are deep underground, to avoid the worst of the weather. Undersea dredging operations carried out by remotely operated drones are also common. Much of the mining is controlled by a handful of large Magnates: family-run conglomerates that kept a tight grip on mining equipment and expertise during the hard times of the Deluge, and have now emerged as financial and industrial corporate powerhouses. The government of Byalstok reflects this oligarchic, technocratic order: while elections in each habitat arcology are free and democratic, the representatives of the settlements usually have direct ties with the Magnates, who control the industrial economy. In turn, the Magnates back only those representatives that support Magnate economic dominance.

Recently Camros Hierarchate Intelligence (*LTC1 23*) has made tentative diplomatic overtures to the leadership of this world. The Camrosans are keen to study the major meteorological and environmental phenomena of the planet. They have also begun studying the effects of the brown dwarf star Karlyk on the rest of the solar system, and are prospecting for mining on Byalstok and the system's other planets. The general population has not been informed of these new arrivals. Only the more senior authorities are aware of the Magnates' collaboration with off-worlders. The Camrosans have done their best to fit in, but the locals shake their heads when they watch the occasional undercover Camrosan scientist head off into the worst weather imaginable. Some have not returned.

**Language, Culture and Religion:** The prevalent languages among the residents of the few remaining habitats on Byalstok include Euroslavic, Germanic and Indic. Sino-Slavic is a common trade language among the brave souls who ply the waterways on the planet. English is useful for those exploring ruins, but it is not often spoken. Most Byalers are largely atheistic, a byproduct of their harsh lives and cynical outlook. Culturally, Byalers embrace the “work hard, play hard” ethos common to many industrial societies, and often engage in dangerous daredevil antics that give many visitors pause.





Black X's denote ruins of habitat arcologies.

## NOTABLE PLACES

### *KABRYN*

This is the largest arcology settlement on the Great Bay, and is highly influential across Byalstok. Kabryn is the nominal planetary capital, and is where the Magnate Council meets semi-annually to discuss economic and planetary business. The arcology sits on the shore, wedged into cliffs and spilling down under the sea floor as well. It houses some 150,000 inhabitants, who engage in a variety of industries, though the most important are aquaculture, greenhouse farming, carniculture, and very extensive mining operations in the city and the surrounding countryside. There are a number of deep, well-established mines in the Little Holmy Range southwest of the city. This provides Kabryn with a great deal of wealth suitable for industrial production and trade. As well, food production in the city generates a modest surplus. Living in Kabryn is good, if you are an employed resident. The Karta Trading League has established a trading outpost here in Kabryn. It is run as a private fiefdom by the Factor, Mardsen Pilloy, who has used his considerable influence to build a massive private fortune.

Kabryn's society embraces a duality of risk and reward. The planet's biosphere can be so hostile to humanity, that Kabryners have enshrined "devil-may-care" as a way of life. Everyone, from the lowliest urchin in the bowels of the arcology, to the highest ranking Magnate official in a sparkling penthouse apartment, is raised and encouraged to take risks to get ahead. Those who succeed in whatever venture they have risked reap the rewards, often in the most hedonistic and somewhat self-destructive manner possible. Those who fail in their risky ventures, are expected to own up to the consequences, whether they be financial ruin, personal injury, or even death. Putting the larger community at risk is not acceptable, but Risk-Pacts between friends or small groups are not unheard of.

### *MAGNATE COUNCIL HABITAT*

This opulent mini-arcology exists in its own domed habitat adjacent to the main Kabryn central habitat arcology. It houses the largest Magnate, the Turovs. The Turov family residences, administration and the corporate headquarters are all located here. The Magnate Council meets every six months. For about two weeks or so prior to the Magnate Council meetings, Kabryn and the Magnate Habitat become the focus of every form of political plot and industrial espionage mission on the planet.

### *LIDA*

The seaside port of Lida is one of the few places where the city arcology opens to the native biosphere. This is because of the Lida Cove ecosystem, a rare instance where imported life forms have survived to form a cohesive self-sustaining biome. Despite the fact that some of the city's 25,000 people live outside the protection of the arcology, most of the city's food supply still comes from hydroponics and carniculture. However, experimental farming and some ranching does take place.

### *NAVARUDAK*

A mining settlement par-excellence, in Navarudak, mining and heavy industry are the main economic, and, some would even say, cultural activities. There are 80,000 people who live here, and the massive underground and strip mines that dot the surrounding mountains employ about three quarters of them. Three Magnates are based out of Navarudak: the Medved, the Leonas, and the Shacht are all descendants of the founders of Navarudak, and have been major influences on the arcology's development ever since. The locals are notoriously fond of contact sports: boxing, wrestling and mixed martial arts, as well as rugby. They are also noted as legendary drinkers; mentioning this stereotype is often enough to drive many Navaruds to fight. In addition to mining, heavy and light vehicles are produced here, as are a variety of weapons. Navarudak has trade agreements with Lida and Zagorny to supply the settlement with food.

### GRODNOW

This arcology was founded as the last major port of call before ships entered the Yukat Channel. Nowadays, Grodnow is a delapidated shadow of its former trading glory. There are only about 5,000 souls living here, with no Magnate or mining interests present at all. Grodnow is ruled by a democratic council, but most of the day-to-day decisions are made by a small group of technicians that are dedicated to maintaining the aging, ancient facility. Much of the Grodnow arcology is still serviceable, but each year, a little more is lost to weather damage and the encroaching, hostile, native biosphere. It is worth noting that the storm wall that protects Grodnow is still functional, though the local techs are concerned: new parts and extensive repairs are desperately needed. Grodnovans are a resigned, and somewhat suspicious society. They have little to offer in the way of trade, but have managed to hold on to a great deal of scientific and historical data about Byalstok. During the height of the colonization era, Grodnovans engaged in a great deal of aquaculture. Many of their ships now rest at the bottom of the Yuzhno Mor, victims of terrible storms and unfortunate accidents.

### THE YUKAT CHANNEL

The Channel is a feat of engineering: on the northern end, the Ostcat Canal, and on the southern end, the Bosporous Canal were dug to allow cheap shipping between Grodnow and Zagorny. The Channel was a colonial success story, and for many years the two settlements traded and prospered. During the Deluge, the canals fell into disrepair, and a group of pirates settled in the area of the Channel, charging a hefty toll to pass through. The *Yukat Flotilla*, as they call themselves, is now a self-sustaining society of sea-nomads, living in the hulls of old container ships, using smaller vessels for transportation and raiding. The pirates have learned how to weather the freak storms, as well as the more ravenous wildlife. They are the most expert sailors on the planet, if not the entire Lurian Trailing Cluster.

### ZAGORNY

The southernmost arcology on Byalstok is also the gloomiest. Zagorny's geographical location means that it gets very little sunlight for most of the year. Furthermore, the Kryshenko Mor is an icy, slushy saltwater ocean that makes for difficult, dangerous navigation. The Zagornians have a fitting solution: they go underwater. Much of the arcology has expanded to the ocean floor, and the Zagornians have further adapted by developing a high-tech, though small, indigenous submersible industry. Much of their sea-going capabilities are comprised of surface vessels, but Zagornian submersibles are highly advanced boasting high cargo capacities and long ranges. This allows them to carry out undersea mining operations, as well as some very unique aquaculture practices. The Zagornians carry out seabed dredge mining, and use geothermal energy vents to power and heat krill and kelp farms.

### YAMA

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars
1005	Yama	Breathable	Temperate	Miscible	19 million	3		G8V K9V

**Tags:** Oceanic World, Civil War

**Enemies:** *Captain Halmon Dektor*, Maritime Union flotilla commander. *Lieutenant Restis Naro*, Karta Trading League spy at Opal, a major naval base for the Ortik Islands Confederation. *Kalimar*, a massive “kraken” beast that eats ships. *Dar Allesandro*, captain of an *actual* pirate raiding ship (not a privateer) that has been preying on civilian convoys and merchant traders. KTL agent *Ward Khan*, who is overseeing the secret shipments of weapons and technology to the Maritime Union.

**Friends:** *Vera Grant*, an Ortik Islands diplomat and trader at Plymouth. She has contacts, jobs and a line on valuable information and trade goods for anyone willing to work for her. *Captain Shell Trevian*, of what passes for the Ortik Island Confederacy navy, commanding the naval base at Opal. He needs some mercenaries to help shore up the city’s defenses. *Svita Ovan*, a KTL merchant ship crew left on Yama when she refused her captain’s advances. She wants off this rock, and back to Prime Station at Basajaun (*LTC1 34*).

**Complications:** A massive storm front hits while the PCs are area. A naval battle spills over onto the PCs’ location. A tanker spill causes a major ecological catastrophe. A press gang captures the PCs! Food riots break out when a supply convoy is intercepted and sunk by one of the belligerents.

**Things:** A treasure trove of antediluvian pretech artifacts worth a fortune, behind enemy lines. A shipment of weapons and technology that needs intercepting, or delivering. A scuba apparatus. Maps of sea trade routes. Plans for a major military offensive. Proof that the KTL has been secretly supplying the Maritime Union with advanced weaponry and equipment. An old field gun with ancient ammunition, sitting in a scrap yard.

**Places:** A storm swept ship’s deck. A serene, secluded atoll cove. The Maritime Union naval shipyard, with a TL3 aircraft carrier currently under construction in the yard. An island cliff top from which a sea battle is visible. The neutral port city of Plymouth, a city in the Harba Basin, which serves as a haven for spies, diplomats, and information brokers from all sides. It is also one giant red light district.

### Trade: Waterworld at War

Goods	Type	Cost
1 Processed fish and krill	Agricultural, Low tech	500
2 Exotic Caviars	Luxury, Low tech, Compact	10000
3 Acquatic Pharmaceuticals	Medical, Compact, Rare	50000
4 Housewares, Postech	Common, Postech	5000
5 Parts, Vehicles (watercraft)	Tools, Vehicle, bulky	10000
6 Metawheat	Agricultural, Low Tech	500
7 Tools, Industrial	Tool, Postech	10000
8 Seaweed, refined (cakes and rations)	Agricultural, Low tech	500
9 Small Arms, Projectile	Military, Low Tech,	5000
10 Vehicles, military watercraft	Vehicle, postech, military, bulky	25000

### Friction: 3

**Supply and Demand:** -2 Agricultural, -1 Vehicles, +1 Tools, +1 Military (due to Civil War), +1 Livestock, +2 Postech

**Trouble:** 3, As per Tyranny or Cosmopolitan world

**Notes:** Yama's civil war is always driving demand for military technology. Otherwise, this water world would be a quiet place for worthwhile trading. Most star traders deal with either one side of the conflict or the other, and are careful to avoid any local entanglements. Only the most desperate, or most nervy, trade with both sides. Most free trading is carried out at Plymouth, recognized as a free port by all the belligerents.

**Fleet Build Points:** 60. The Yamans are a low-level TL3 society with a well-developed industrial base. They don't have any space manufacturing capabilities, and are at least a generation away before being able to re-learn the requisite science. But the Yamans are very enterprising, and would be able to contribute a great deal towards fleet construction budgets, if they weren't busy killing each other in their destructive civil war.

**Yama Fleet:** None. The Yamans have a well-developed TL3 wet-navy, but no space assets to speak of. A handful of salvageable wrecks of small spacecraft can be found on Kedma and Negba, as well as in the unexplored asteroid belt further out in the system.



### SYSTEM OVERVIEW

This solar system is notable for Nazow, the far binary K-class star that lurks in a slow orbit in the distance. The two stars Sur and Nazow interact mainly by slightly expanding the system's habitable zone. The Yama system has three planets that could support human settlement. However, there are no gas giants here, making wilderness refueling more difficult. As well, the system's asteroid belt is notably poor, comprised mainly of carbonaceous rocks and the occasional iceball. Notably, the planets of Kedma and Negba have never been seriously colonized since before the Deluge.

#### Occupied Orbits

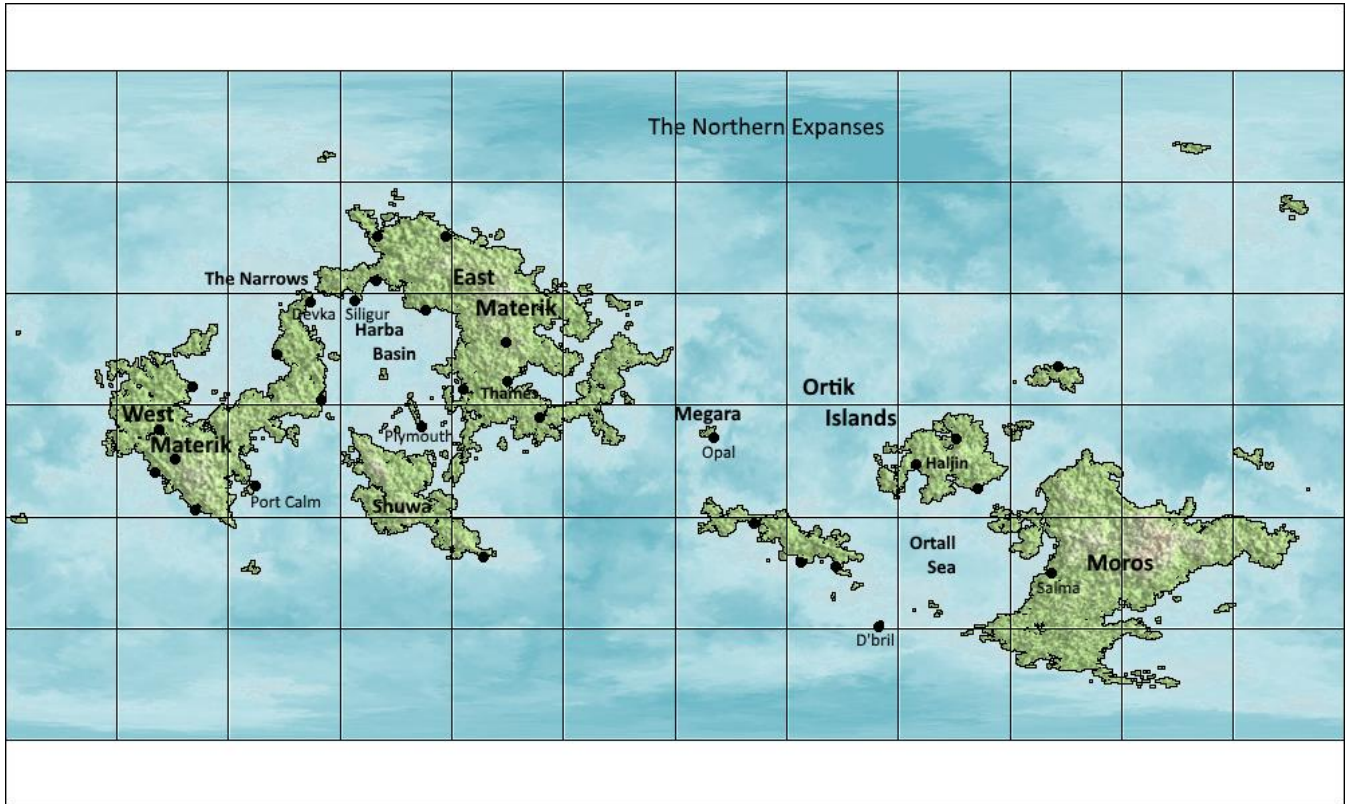
0	Sur (G8V)
1	Kwika (Tiny, Airless, burning)
2	Safna (Medium sized, Toxic, burning)
3	Yama (3 moons: Norida, Olmas, Lina)
4	Kedma (Miscible, Temperate) 1 moon
5	Negba (Miscible, Temperate-Cold) 2 moons
6	Avarat (Immisible, Frozen) 1 moon
7	Asteroid Belt
8	Atsimo (Tiny, Airless)
15	Nazow (K9V)

### PLANETARY OVERVIEW

Yama is the largest and most viable planet for human settlement in the system. It is a water-world, with vast shallow seas, a number of continents and large islands, and thousands of tiny archipelagos. The atmosphere is thicker than standard, but well within human tolerances. The ocean water is not potable, much to the chagrin of the locals. Much effort goes into producing sustainable water filtration systems for more remote human settlements, though there are large freshwater reserves on the larger islands and continents. Flora and fauna here are diverse and highly developed.

Yama's three main continents include the far western island of Moros, and the two largest masses of West and East Materik. Moros is a remote jungle continent-island. Much of it is unexplored and mysterious. West and East Materik are large land masses, separated by a large shallow body of water called the Harba Basin. The northern end of both continents nearly meet at the thin strait known as the Narrows. West Materik is more barren, with a great desert on the southwestern portion of the continent, and a rough mountain chain across its spine. East Materik is much more lush, with rich lowlands and mineral-laden highlands towards the north and east. Just south of the Materiks is the barely settled island-continent of Shuwa, notable for its volcanic mountain range and inhospitable desert. Far off to the east is the Ortik Island archipelago, which consist of hundreds of large and small landmasses off of Moros, and in the Ortall Sea. The Ortik Islands are host to a wealth of flora and fauna, and are cold and damp.

The oceans on Yama are salt-water bodies, and are generally predictable in their currents and weather patterns, though a sailor's almanac has only been compiled for 100 years. Underwater volcanos are quite common on Yama, and their activities form many tiny island atolls, reefs, and underwater mountain ranges. Subaquatic earthquakes and tsunamis are a fact of life here. Notably, the Northern Expanses comprise a very large depression or trench in the ocean floor, and are unusually deep for Yama. The Northern Expanses remain completely unexplored.



### YAMA'S SOCIETY

Human settlement on Yama is extensive with a total population closing in on 20 million souls, belonging to a handful of global native cultures. Technology is roughly equivalent to that of mid-Industrial Europe (TL2-TL3), though full diesel and electrical power has not yet been applied to the naval technologies that are otherwise well-developed. Aircraft are considered military equipment only. Airships are more common.

The Yamans have a long maritime tradition stretching back to the original colonists. Fishing and whaling (for the local equivalents) are well-established industries, and much of rural culture is centered on both activities. Mining and resource extraction is centered around resources with direct military applications and hydrocarbon energy sources.

The Yamans have been locked in a massive, though low-intensity global civil war. This has been ongoing for the last century, with cycles of intermittent cease fires and diplomatic crises that lead to resumptions in hostilities. The war is between the **Maritime Union** of East Materik, an authoritarian bureaucracy, and the **Western League** of West Materik, a smaller federation of territories and city states ruled by an emergency parliament. Naval skirmishes and lightning raids are common, as are long range artillery duels across the Narrows. Currently, there has been a cease fire that has held for the last two years. It is a shakey peace, relying on everyone's goodwill.

The **Ortik Islands Federation** is a newcomer to the hostilities. The Ortikers have drawn a non-aggression treaty with the Maritime Union, but are secretly repairing and resupplying Western League ships. They also have a small privateer fleet that is harassing Maritime shipping. The Maritimers have discovered this, and have decided to punish the Islanders with a large scale punitive "bandit" raid on Opal in the near future. The impending violence has made Megara and the rest of the Islands unstable with unrest. There are thousands of refugees from all belligerents who have come to make the Ortiks, and especially Megara, a new home, and they are beginning to agitate and demonstrate in the streets of Haljin and Opal.

Much of the social order in all three polities is the same. There are many clans and loosely-knit federations of fishermen and traders. These act as the social safety network, filling in because the governments are generally too busy politicking and waging war. Fishermen are technically exempt from being drafted into their respective navies, however, many are captured and pressed into service by others. It is common to see Ortikers fighting alongside Maritimers and Westerners on any ship. Only the most important vessels of each fleet are crewed exclusively with their own citizens.

Although the civil war on Yama has been a fact of life for a century or more, recent events here have not been favourable for stability: the Karta Trading League has arrived and made contact with the largest federation, the Maritime Union. The MU has been trading aggressively for advanced technology that will help it overcome its longtime enemies, the Western League and the upstart Ortik Islands Federation. The civil war is the result of xenophobia, religious bigotry, and hunger for resources. The Karta Trading League station at Thames, the capital city of the Maritime Union, has become a major source of supplies, technology and training for the Union. The KTL, in turn has generated a great deal of hard currency for its coffers back on Basajaun by backing the Maritime Union.

Unfortunately, the Maritime Union has just finalized a secret trade agreement with the local Karta Trader's League station on Thames for advanced weapon designs and other military technologies. This will likely enable the Union to actually engage in a bloody land invasion across the Narrows and into Western League territory proper. The Western League is dreading the resumption of hostilities, because it has rightly suspected off-world KTL meddling. It would like this to stop, or at least it would like to locate its own supplier for off-world high technology military hardware. The Merchant Houses of Lur are currently sending diplomatic feelers to further this end.

**Language, Culture and Religion:** The Maritime Union's population is largely Muslim, and speaks Arabic and Indic, while the Western League is a polyglot of Mandalay, Sianese and Sino-Slavic (one of the few places where it is not only a trade creole). The religions of the two main political opponents on Yama do contribute a great deal to the tensions here. Although the Western League is officially secular, a large Christian interest group in the Western League is responsible for banding many of the different factions together; it has also injected a great deal of religious rhetoric into the war against the Maritime Union. The Union, for its part, is not averse to using religion to unify its population behind its war goals, but is largely secular in its day-to-day administration. The main cultural scourge on Yama is unbridled expansionism and imperialism, as well as cultural and religious chauvenism on both sides.

### **PLACES OF NOTE**

#### ***MOROS***

This remote island is only sparsely populated. It is the most hostile environment, barring the depths of the Northern Expanses, on Yama, being filled largely with misty swamps and jungles. The only civilized settlement is Salma, a town of 10,000 that is rapidly gaining a reputation as a rough and tumble den of criminals, traders and adventurers who are looking to strike it rich exploring the unknown island continent. There are rumours of antediluvian temples filled with pretech treasures and artifacts to make even the most unimaginative very curious.

### PLYMOUTH

This large port city of half a million souls is the unofficial neutral meeting ground of all the belligerents. Plymouth is densely populated, hectic and in a constant state of flux. Much of the city is built on permanently moored vessels that have long since become part of the infrastructure of the place. Plymouth is the only place where interstellar traders from offworld are given a fair shake—though much of the trading is dominated by the Karta Trading League. The city is dangerous, chaotic and filled with dark alleys, floating mansions, and intrigue. The civil war is fought here through assassinations, kidnapping and dirty espionage tricks of all kinds.

### KALIMAR

A massive aquatic creature that resembles the enormous aquatic dinosaurs from ancient Earth. Kalimar is often dismissed as a sailor's legend, but the giant creature has appeared from time to time in the Northern Expanses, destroying merchant convoys or even warships. No one is sure what attracts the creature. Kalimar looks like a giant aquatic dinosaur, with gills, fins, scales and an enormous maw of teeth. It also has four tentacles protruding from its shoulders, which it uses to grapple boats or humans. This creature was likely the product of some mad antediluvian experiment in genetics. No one knows for sure.

Kalimar			
Armor Class	17	No. Appearing	1
Hit Dice	20	Saving Throw	9
Attack Bonus	+10	Movement	15 (in water)
Damage	2d10 bite/2d6 tentacle (four) 4d6 ram (vs. boats only)	Morale	12

### YAMA AIR AND NAVAL VESSELS

The following represent a small sampling of TL2-TL3 naval vessels that are commonly used by the Maritime Union, Western League, Ortik Islands, and privateers. GMs are encouraged to modify them to suit their tastes and needs. These vehicles are large enough that they are separated into basic sections. Reducing the hit points of a section to zero is enough to cripple the vessel. Reducing the Hull's hit points to zero will send the ship to the bottom. All these ships use hydrocarbon fueling, unless otherwise noted.

**TL2 AMPHIBIOUS LANDER**

This littoral craft is designed to be launched from a larger mothership (like a cruiser), and deliver its compliment of marines and light vehicles to the shore. The amphibious lander is meant to be deployed en masse, or whenever there is little-to-no resistance expected.

<b>Amphibious Lander</b>		<b>40,000Cr.</b>	
Speed	0	Km/h Travel	40km/h
Armor	6	Power	3/2 free
Hit Points	Hull: 20 Bridge: 10 Engine: 10	Mass	14/0 free
Crew	4	Hardpoints	2/0 free
Base Frame	Ground Truck (TL3)		
Fittings	1x Heavy Machine Gun: 3d6#, (+2 to hit) Cargo Space (enough for one vehicle) Extra Passengers (one platoon of 40 marines)		

**TL2 CRUISER**

This is a large, well-armed but lightly armored vessel that often operates independently. A TL2 cruiser is no match for a starship—even a ramshackle one—but its anti-aircraft guns are capable of causing minor damage. The cruiser’s large guns cannot hope to hit an airborne target, but woe betide anyone foolish enough to be caught in a shore bombardment (use the artillery rules in SC 21).

<b>Cruiser (TL2)</b>			
Speed	0	Km/h Travel	30km/h
Armor	* (8 vs. gunnery weapons)		
Hit Points	Bridge: 40, Engine: 60, Hull: 120, Turrets: 60 each		
Crew	120		
Skills	Vehicle/Sea, Combat/Gunnery, Tech/Postech		
Fittings	4x Anti-Aircraft guns (3d8#), will do 1d4 against a Starship (+2 to hit) Main Guns (3): can fire once per ten rounds. Armor Plating x4		

**L2 COMMERCE RAIDER**

Although cruisers are often employed as commerce raiders, they are often too valuable to do so. The TL2 Commerce Raider is a smaller, faster vessel designed to raid shipping lanes and engage in privateering operations. Many are able to be camouflaged as fast cargo ships, allowing them to set up ambushes, or to avoid reprisal attacks.

<b>Commerce Raider (TL2)</b>			
Speed	1 (+2)	Km/h Travel	60km/h
Armor	6	Power	9/1 free
Hit Points	Bridge: 20 Engine: 20 Hull: 40	Mass	14/0 free
Crew	10	Hardpoints	2/0 free
Base Frame	Ground truck (TL3)		
Fittings	Afterburner Engine Boost Power System, Milspec, Medium Autocannon (3d8#) Cargo Hold (10 tons)		

**TL2 AIRSHIP**

This majestic craft is a staple of the TL2 technological society on Yama. While aircraft are used on Yama, they are limited by their short range over the vast oceans of this world. Instead, lighter-than-air craft have made a resurgence. This version is a non-military transport version, typical of the sort of vessel that is used to transport cargos while avoiding commerce raiders, privateers, and naval patrols. It is also not unheard of to have a few small aircraft mounts on airships.

<b>Airship (TL2)</b>			
Speed	0	Km/h Travel	100km/h
Armor	0	Power	4/0
Hit Points	25	Mass	16/0
Crew	8	Hardpoints	2/0
Base Frame	Atmoflyer TL3		
Fittings	Cargo Bay (6 tons) Limpet Mount (4x small aircraft) Sealed Atmosphere		

**TL2 FIGHTER-BOMBER**

A cheap mass-produced aircraft made with a metal body, and kept aloft with an internal combustion engine. This fighter bomber is used to attack airships, naval vessels, and ground targets. It is slightly less effective as a dogfighter compared to lighter, faster aircraft. Four fighter-bombers can be mounted on an airship for rapid deployment. It is something of a piloting feat to re-attach the aircraft while the airship is in flight.

<b>Fighter-Bomber (TL2)</b>			
Speed	1	Km/h Travel	300km/h
Armor	0	Power	3/0
Hit Points	15	Mass	7/0
Crew	2	Hardpoints	2/0
Base Frame	Ground Car TL3		
Fittings	Cargo Space (1000kg of bombs: 4 x 2d10 damage or 2 x 3d10 damage, or 1 x 5d10 damage) Heavy Machine Gun: 3d6# Hardpoint Support (HMG) Sealed Atmosphere		

**TL2 SUBMARINE**

These vessels are primitive submersible warships, closer in operation to First World War submarines than later TL2 vessels. A low-tech submarine will operate on the surface of the water, and only submerge to attack from ambush, or to evade—assuming the enemy has no subaquatic sensor arrays. These machines are not comfortable, nor are they particularly safe.

<b>Submarine (TL2)</b>			
Speed	0	Km/h Travel	25km/h (15km/h submerged)
Armor	*		
Hit Points	Hull: 20 Engine: 20		
Crew	25		
Fittings	Sealed Atmosphere Hydrocarbon Fueling Battery Reserve Torpedo Tubes (2 forward, 1 rear): 3d10, -2 to hit Max Depth: 80m		



### NEGBA

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars
1005	Negba	Breathable	Temperate	Miscible	Failed			G8V K9V

**Tags:** Abandoned Colony, Zombies

Negba is an ideal world for human settlement. It is, in some ways, more amenable for colonization than Yama. There is more arable land, and more stable weather patterns. However, the corporate interests that exploited the system for colonization were more interested in Yama's potential to turn a profit in the burgeoning anti-aging pharmaceuticals market through aquacultural pharmacology. Eventually, a small human outpost was established by a group of exiles from the Core. They were never a large, well known group, and whatever they were up to did not survive the Deluge. The colony buildings on Negba are now overgrown and in ruins, after six hundred years of weathering. The KTL has not performed more than a cursory survey, and have not discovered any ruins. Since Negba is uninhabited, they have focused entirely on Yama.

### KEDMA

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars
1005	Kedma	Breathable	Temp-Cold	Miscible	Failed			G8V K9V

**Tags:** Freak Weather, Minimal Contact

Kedma is a hostile planet that was never seriously considered for colonization, despite the fact that it has a compatible biosphere and atmosphere. The problem is that the planet's eccentric orbit causes very erratic weather patterns which create violent storms that would require any sort of agriculture to take place entirely underground. Combined with the generally cold planetary climate, Kedma was skipped over when corporate surveyors came to the system. There have been no humans on most of Kedma, though a smuggler might find this planet quite useful for hiding away illicit merchandise.

*LEPRA*

Hex	Name	Atmosphere	Temperature	Biosphere	Pop	TL	GG	Stars
1106	Lepra	Corrosive, Invasive	Warm	Microbial	OP: 2000	4	1	F3III

**Tags:** Hostile Space, Gold Rush, (Alien Ruins)

**Enemies:** *Thomas Krozenko*, a mercenary who has been hired to muscle-in on other people’s claims. *Greg Olafsen*, the Karta Trading League representative who is nominally in charge of Zehir Station and who oversees the payment of miners. *Space pirates* operating out of a secret base in the Oort cloud. Their ship is the *Santa Lucinda*, a corvette raider. *Dr. Sanjay Elsted*, a Pact of Koios (*LTC1 24*) maltech researcher looking to harvest extremophile microbes for maltech weapons development.

**Friends:** *Kyle Majors*, security commander on Zehir Station with a genuinely good disposition. *Avia Qin*, a miner who is tired of the KTL’s stranglehold on labour. *Kuryen Tan*, a mine crew leader from Byalstok who has amassed a large stock of ore that he wishes to move off-world. *Miri Podunzk*, a Gure Gauza operator with absolutely no scruples or morals, but she’s also annoyed at how Olafsen runs the operation at Zehir Station (read: she isn’t getting a sufficiently large cut).

**Complications:** A solar flare wreaks havoc with electronics, and people begin to panic. A mine collapses. An asteroid is on a collision course with Zehir station. The seals and safeties for keeping the insidious atmosphere out of a mine on the moon’s surface begin a cascade failure. The processing station malfunctions. Miners unionize and strike for better working conditions. The KTL increases its fees for ore processing.

**Things:** The last rescue pod in a mining outpost on the moon’s surface. A prospecting tube sample from one of the methane seas, containing previously unknown extremophile microbial life, worth a small fortune. The beanstalk from the moon’s surface up to the station, a juicy target for anti-KTL terrorists. The deed for the late Jeremia Logath’s claim. No one has ever met Jeremia Logath.

**Places:** A small shelter in the middle of a nasty corrosive rainstorm. The dark, claustrophobic mines on the moon Zehir, where careless people can be dissolved by the atmosphere. Mining an ice asteroid in the asteroid field for water. The rickety and old Zehir station/boom town where everyone not planet-side lives; it feels like living in a sewer system. Riding the beanstalk down to the moon’s surface. The processing plant at Zehir station, currently overtaxed. An abandoned base carved out of an asteroid: the perfect hiding place in this system, but who built it, and are there others?

**Trade: Mining World**

Goods	Type	Cost
1 Colonial Survival Supplies	Survival, Postech, Tools	10000
2 Fine Liquor	Luxury, Low Tech, Compact	10000
3 Fusion Plants	Postech, Tools, Bulky	10000
4 Medical Supplies, Postech	Medical, Postech, Compact	25000
5 Metal Ingots, Rare	Mineral, Bulky, Rare	5000
6 Tools, Astronautic	Postech, Astronautic, Tools	25000
7 Metal Ingots, Luxury Minerals and Metals	Mineral, Luxury, Rare	25000
8 Postech Building Material	Tools, Postech, Bulky	10000
9 Tools, Industrial	Tools, Postech	10000
10 Organic Compounds, Rare	Biotech, Postech, Rare	25000

**Friction:** 3—the KTL makes sure that it gets its own cut.

**Supply and Demand:** +2 Cultural, +2 Luxuries, +1 Tools, +1 Survival, -2 Minerals, -1 Consumer

**Trouble:** 2—though this is a rough and tumble place, the KTL keeps a close eye on things. Use the trouble table from the Industrial World Table.

**Notes:** The human habitation in Lepra system on Zehir exists solely towards the goal of the extraction of rare minerals, hydrocarbons, and organic polymer compounds from the strange moon’s surface and atmosphere. As well, a great deal of deep mining occurs for rare metals, crystals and other important TL4 raw materials. Much of this is done remotely with hardened drones operated from small pre-fab bunkers that are set down on the planetary surface, or installed in sheltered caves. No matter what, the work is dangerous, but the payoff can be immense.

**Fleet Build Points:** 10. Lepra’s population is too small to actually contribute directly to any shipbuilding endeavors. However, the raw materials harvested from Zehir (both from the ground and atmosphere) are essential to TL4 spike drive-capable vessels. This system’s production output is absolutely essential to growing the number of spike drive ships being produced at Lur and Basajaun.

**Lepra Fleet:** The main attraction in this system is Zehir station, a small facility with a variety of processing plants for ores and various other raw materials brought up from the moon itself. The beanstalk elevator that does most of the lifting eliminates the need for a large fleet of cargo shuttles. However, many radiation-hardened system shuttles and other small vessels can be found here. The beanstalk itself needs constant maintenance to operate in these extremely hostile conditions. As well, cargo vessels are constantly coming to Zehir station to load up on cargo, and then depart to Lur or Basajaun (via Yama and Meza Virs). Zehir Station can support half a dozen or so frigate-sized traders at its docks, and has facilities sufficient for minor repairs and refuelling. Occasionally the Lurian Republic Navy will send a patrol frigate to Lepra to investigate reports of pirates operating from remote asteroid bases, or to engage in high-radiation emergency training. The Lepra Run, as it is known among navy personnel, is the least pleasant assignment in the entire Republican Navy.

### SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Lepra is the name of the white star that is the brightest and largest star in the Lurian Trailing Cluster. Lepra is a very rare F-class giant star, thus it and its solar system are scientific oddities. The system is dangerous and difficult to navigate. Thousands of asteroids and comets careen around Lepra in capricious orbits. Lepra itself emits high levels of radiation and ionized solar wind at an astonishing and dangerous rate. Only three dead, half-molten terrestrial planets survive in the system; the rest may have been swallowed by the star's expansion into its giant phase. A gas giant called Narakam orbits Lepra at a safe enough distance to maintain its hydrogen and methane atmosphere. Narakam's largest moon is Zehir, the system's only inhabited world. Further out from Lepra itself is the system's Oort cloud, which is particularly dense, and filled with a great deal of debris left from the star's giant-phase expansion.

**Lepra is Angry:** Radiation levels in this system are high enough that the following rules for radiation exposure should be used: the occupants of a standard spike-drive ship in Lepra system will be cooked by high intensity solar radiation after *24 hours*. Properly shielded system boats will last four days (96 hours) before the shielding is rendered inoperable. This means that a vessel with a Spike-1 drive will *have to* "trim the course" and boost speed to Spike-2 to make Zehir Station before their crews succumb to radiation poisoning (see *SWN 65* for rules on in-system travel times and trimming the course). Radiation shielding costs 1 mass point, and 20,000 credits. As well, The electromagnetic interference caused by the star makes regular radio communication impossible; sensors are next to useless: -4 skill check penalty to scan for anything in the same region, and it is impossible to scan for anything in other regions of the system.

### Occupied Orbits

0-	Lepra (F3III)
4	
6	Lepra I (molten rockball)
7	Lepra II (burnt husk of a rockball)
8	Lepra III (burnt husk)
12	Narakam (GG: moon Zehir, and Zehir station)
18	Oort Cloud and Asteroids

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### PLANETARY OVERVIEW

The only inhabited world of the Lepra system is Zehir, the largest moon of the gas giant Narakam. Zehir revolves in a close orbit around the gas giant, keeping Zehir in Narakam's magnetic field. This magnetic field offers natural protection from Lepra's harsh radiation. Zehir is a bizarre place, with a highly dangerous, insidious atmosphere of corrosive toxic chemicals. Tidal forces heat the moon's core, and hostile seas of toxic chemicals and liquid hydrocarbons bubble and steam in the noxious atmosphere. Xenoplanetologists are at a loss to explain this place. More amazing still is the yet-undiscovered presence of extremophile microbes in the atmosphere! These are still unknown to scientists, but it is only a matter of time before these highly alien life forms are discovered. Zehir has been a major source of mining revenues for a KTL-Lurian joint venture that built and manages the facilities. Currently, a few hundred prospectors and miners are in this system, looking for new strikes on Zehir, and among the system's many asteroids and comets. They have constructed a few stations and outposts on this hostile moon's surface, always on the moon's dark side. The Karta Trading League has, with the help of investors from the Merchant Houses of Lur, built a rudimentary, but impressive, refining station and starport in a static orbit around the moon, positioned in a lagrange point of the gas giant-moon orbital system, complete with cargo-lifting beanstalk. This station is called Zehir Station, and it represents a new paradigm: rather than have a mining venture attempt to finance the entire operation, the KTL facilitates the running of Zehir station. Mining ventures, independent miners, and others can arrive here to find some rudimentary infrastructure already in place. Refining, processing, and handling of raw materials is carried out by the KTL, who charge a modest service fee. This mining operation is crucial to the nascent Lurian ship-building industry: Zehir is the only place in the LTC that the Lurian Republic has located the rare elements required for the manufacture of new spike drives. The Lurians' eventual goal is to establish a dockyard and spike drive manufacturing center in the system.

### ZEHIR STATION OVERVIEW

Zehir station is a standard small, rugged model, capable of housing roughly 400 people, and furnished to process ores and other materials brought up from Zehir's surface. To facilitate the cheap transfer of ores, the KTL has cooperated with the six Merchant Houses of Lur (*LTC1 22*) to finance its largest project to date: a cargo beanstalk elevator from the safe side of Zehir up to the station. The beanstalk is impressive, and definitely reduces the costs associated with shipping ores and other raw materials up from the moon's surface. Unfortunately, it is not weathering Zehir's particularly noxious atmosphere as well as was originally projected. Breakdowns and delays are common. The KTL has had to import a great deal of technical support at great expense. The station itself is running well, and since the Lurian Trailing Cluster's resurgence in space travel, more and more miners and others looking to strike it rich have been passing through. Only the hardest of miners dare venture down to the planet, but all sorts of wheeling and dealing takes place on board Zehir Station. The people that call the station home are a varied lot, with many traders, brokers and drifters in their midst. The station is an ideal place for deals of all kinds, since the security staff can be paid to look the other way, so long as the activities of visitors and locals do not jeopardize the safety or profits of the station, or its shareholders.

**On Zehir:** The moon's noxious atmosphere is a major hazard, and mining is an exceptionally dangerous activity. Many do their best to strike it rich, and then leave the system with a tidy sum. However, more do not succeed, and are stuck on Zehir in debt to the KTL or other even less savoury creditors. The miners have developed small habitats in their mines. Many of the seals are insufficient for long term habitation, but that's not the goal of living on Zehir. Most habitats are near where the Zehir beanstalk has been tethered to a subterranean facility recently dug at great cost to the KTL and the Lurian Merchant Houses. The miners usually work in shifts: a few days on the moon's surface mining and prospecting, followed by a trip up the beanstalk for a few days of ore processing, relaxation, and trading before returning into the corrosive soup of Zehir's atmosphere.

**Language, Culture and Religion:** The KTL runs the station at Lepra, which means that English and Sino-Slavic are the dominant languages here. The miners are a mixed lot from across the Lurian Trailing Cluster, meaning that one family might speak Nigerian, while another Mandalay, and they could only communicate in a broken pidgin English. There is no native culture to speak of. Festivals and religious observances are held only privately, though funerals are public events often followed by a wake on the station. However, the miners do conform to type: when not on the job, they can often be found in the bars and brothels located on Zehir Station or at the bottom terminus of the space elevator.

**The Pact of Koios:** This Camrosan doomsday cult (*LTC1 24*) is secretly operating on Zehir. Dr. Sanjay Elsted is hard at work attempting to extract extremophile microbes from the soupy, toxic atmosphere. Her hope is that the bacteria she obtains will prove to be highly compatible to extensive genetic modification and adaptable to known anti-pathogen defenses. She plans on developing a maltech bioweapon plague, and unleashing it on Lur. Thus far, the Lurians are unaware of her intents, but the Guardian Committee might be on to her. Elsted has a small retinue of fanatically loyal henchmen who have extensive training, and are very capable combatants.

**The Asteroids:** There are rumors and reports of remote smugglers' hideouts and pirate bases hidden away in Oort Cloud asteroids far, far away from Lepra's harsh glare. Most of these claims are completely unfounded, though pirates do love the Lepra system: if you have a place to hide in the shadows of the star (away from the radiation), no one can find you. If there are bases hidden on asteroids, then they clearly predate the Deluge. This begs the question: "who built these asteroid bases?" Many explorer has left to answer this question. None have returned alive.

### *FURTHER ADVENTURES IN THE LURIAN TRAILING CLUSTER*

What follows are over two dozen adventure outlines set in the Lurian Trailing Cluster. There is at least one adventure per system, to help working GMs get a game going with as little effort as possible. These adventure outlines are not meant to be full adventures, but instead represent a halfway point between a one-page write-up for an adventure idea and a full published adventure module. Included are many NPC and vehicle stat blocks, to save time and provide a baseline for challenges. GMs may however have to procure maps for the adventures. This might be challenging. Online image searches for locales, as well as using one of many free map-drawing tools on the web (such as scribblemaps.com), can greatly reduce the work involved in developing entertaining maps.

**Adventures and Campaigns in the Lurian Trailing Cluster:** Here are a few suggestions for campaign ideas in the Lurian Trailing Cluster. These are not meant to be story-oriented campaigns, but rather general themes for sandbox play.

**Anti-Slavery/Gure Gauza:** Many of the adventures involve covert or overt struggles against the Gure Gauza crime syndicate, and its offensive slave trade in the Lurian Trailing Cluster. The PCs could have many interests in overthrowing this mundane, albeit horrendous practice, but the fight will be difficult, protracted, and likely result in many lives lost. The Gure Gauza as an organization is not completely committed to the slave trade, and perhaps making slave trading less profitable will produce the desired results, albeit without the satisfaction of bringing all the slave traders to justice.

**The Karta Trading League:** The Traveller faction of the KTL has been supplanted by and large by the Consolidators, and the result is that the KTL has become decadent, corrupt, and increasingly obsessed with power. The KTL has quietly tolerated the slave trade, much to the disgust of many old-guard Travellers. Replacing the KTL entirely might be too destructive, but certainly aiding those who would take power to stop the corruption would be a more immediate and viable goal.

**The Lurian Republic:** This rising power in the LTC is eager to re-establish some modicum of interstellar civilization—on its own terms, of course. Campaigns in the service of the Lurian Republic can involve exploration, diplomatic missions to different LTC worlds, anti-slaving operations, and espionage. As well, a major theme could be supporting those factions friendly to the Lurian Republic on other worlds. How will history judge the Lurians meddling in the affairs of other societies?

**Treasure Hunting:** Interstellar civilization has only just re-started in the Lurian Trailing Cluster. There are countless ruins containing untold fortunes just waiting to be picked up. Will the players be the first to arrive on the scene and loot? And will they leave the ruins alive?



**Political Meddling:** There are countless opportunities for a band of ambitious, and slightly amoral group of interstellar adventurers to fundamentally alter local political and social conditions. Players might enjoy watching as their meddling sparks global thermonuclear war, or prevents it. Or perhaps the players are so incensed at the sight of medieval barbarism that they feel their characters have to act. There are plenty of conflicts in which the judicious hand of the Player Characters could tip the balance of power in one direction, or another.



### ABREIA (LTC2 26)

Adventures on Abreia can focus on expeditions into the Living Desert, and the exploration of pre-Deluge ruins—classic dungeon crawling and wilderness survival gaming. Alternatively, GMs might focus on the political and cultural situation of the warlords in the north of the planet, and have their players treat with semi-savage dictators ruling over swamps. Finally, the Gure Gauza slave trade is alive and well on Abreia; the planet serves as a market for buying and selling human chattel. Any campaign focusing on the destruction of the slave trade in the Lurian Trailing Cluster will likely end up on Abreia at some point.

**1. WELCOME TO THE DESERT:** A scientific expedition went missing in Abreia’s Living Desert. The PCs have a ship and are hired to conduct a search. No one thinks there are any survivors from the research mission but the equipment and data collected might be very valuable. What the PCs do find out in the desert will be more terrifying than they could have anticipated.

**Outline:** As interstellar civilization begins anew in the Lurian Trailing Cluster, so too does scientific research into the strange phenomena found across the LTC. The Living Desert of Abreia is one place that has garnered some attention recently: there are myths that Abreia was once a lush garden world, and that during the Deluge, the desert swallowed the planet whole. There are also rumors of bizarre psychic manifestations, called “djinn” by the locals, in the Living Desert. These are the sorts of rumors that motivate researchers, explorers, and player characters to mount expeditions into the heart of the Living Desert.

**Player Briefing:** Dr. Leon Kristal, a native Abreian scientist, recently sponsored a research caravan into the desert, and it is now three months late coming back to Gateway (LTC2 31) at the northern edge of the Living Desert. The PCs are hired to take their ship along the charted route of the expedition, set down when they pick up any sensor readings or beacons, and recover as much of the expedition as they can. Dr. Kristal will furnish them with a guide, and is willing to loan the group a sealed desert buggy if they ask for one. Kristal is not optimistic about the chances of survival of the caravan. Unless they miraculously found, shelter, water, and food, their supplies will have run out two months ago. No, the good doctor is especially interested in any and all scientific data that can be recovered from whatever the PCs find—and, of course, any remains of the expedition should be brought home for a proper burial.

**GM Details:** The PCs will be able to home in on the caravan’s radio beacon, but EM interference from the desert and high winds will force them to land and continue to the beacon on foot/vehicle. This should be ample time for the PCs to get attacked by the hungry local fauna, or blasted by a horrendous sandstorm—or both. The NPC guide will be helpful in avoiding these perils of the Living Desert, but will be of little use in a fight. That’s not what he’s been paid to do.

The PCs should find the remains of the scientific caravan without undue difficulty. There are signs that a creature of some sort tore through the caravan vehicles and personnel with great violence. Much of

the scientific instruments are destroyed, but enough should be salvageable for Dr. Kristal's purposes. Most interestingly, a trail of debris and human remains leads to some mesa formations only a few kilometers away.

A cave entrance at the base of one of the mesas leads to a small, overgrown facility made by human hands. The astute PCs should recognize Terran Authority-era markings, and all will notice the trail of blood that leads into the facility. Exploration should not take long; this is not a large facility with multiple levels. It's just a small bunker of unknown function. There should be some basic high-tech treasure, like TL5 stims and old power cells (still usable). Should they explore the entire facility, they will also discover more human remains, and the grisly sight of at least half a dozen fresh bodies, cut up into pieces of various shapes and sizes, in a grotesque and inhuman display.

It is at this point that the PCs should meet the Abreian "Demon" (*LTC2 32*, reprinted below), that has been overcome with curiosity regarding human anatomy. PCs would be well-advised to leave the premises and get back to their vehicle without delay. The Demon will not attack unless attacked first; any attempts to communicate with it will not be successful. Deliberate attempts at telepathic contact or the use of other psychic powers on the Demon will encourage it to take more interest in any psychic among the party.

**Abreian "Demon":** These entities are another symptom of the malfunctioning psitech terraforming devices hidden in Abreia's crust. An Abreian Demon is a humanoid creature that is composed of clouds of smoke, surrounded by flames. A Demon is a rare and terrifying sight: an intelligent, disembodied humanoid who speaks to the PCs directly. They are not inherently violent, but are unstable, and easily provoked. They can only be damaged by psitech weaponry, and non-heat energy weapons: lasers and plasma do not work. It is possible that an Abreian Demon is actually some sort of avatar of the alien terraforming technology that was combined with Kelechi Etung's insane psychic imprint.

An Abreian Demon can employ a number of seemingly "magical" powers that make it exceptionally dangerous. These include:

**OPEN CONTENT BEGINS HERE**

**Generating illusions:** Range: 150m, Duration: one scene. This power creates the visual illusion of an object, creature (or small group of creatures), or other effect, as visualized by the Abreian Demon up to a maximum size of 20 cubic meters. The illusion can also mimic sound and temperature, but not texture or smells. The Demon can animate the illusion. The image persists so long as the Demon wills it to, or the end of the scene.

If used to create the illusion of one or more creatures, they will have an Armor Class of 13 and will disappear if hit in combat. Damage done by creatures simulated by this spell is not real; those "killed" or otherwise apparently disabled will wake up uninjured at the end of the scene. The illusory damage

done will be equivalent to the normal damage for any attack form simulated. Characters can roll a Mental Save to recognize the illusionary nature of the Demon's creations.

**Turning Invisible:** Range: self, Duration: 24 hours. The Abreian Demon can turn itself invisible as a Main Action. Note that if the creature attacks or otherwise acts against a party, it will become visible.

Create a **wall of fire** three times per day: Range: 150m, Duration: 10 rounds. One side of the wall, selected by the Demon, sends forth waves of heat, dealing 2d4 points of fire damage to creatures within 10 feet and 1d4 points of fire damage to those beyond 10 feet but within 20 feet. The wall deals this damage when it appears and on the Demon's turn each round to all creatures in the area. In addition, the wall deals 2d6+5 points of fire damage to any creature passing through it (Evasion save for half damage). The wall is either a sheet of flame up to 200m long, or a ring with a radius up to 50m. The wall of fire may be up to 20m tall. The Demon may choose to make the wall smaller if desired. The wall may be up to 20m tall.

The Demon can also create fire at will, causing the flame to behave as it wishes, and can launch a fire attack up to 60 meters away, doing 1d8+5 damage. A Demon may also transform itself into a 5-meter-tall pillar of flame three times per day that will set fire to all flammable items within 3 meters. It can retain the pillar shape for up to 3 rounds. When in this form, the pillar of fire adds 1d8 points of damage to the Demon's blows.

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Abreian Demon			
Armor Class	16	No. Appearing	1
Hit Dice	10	Saving Throw	10
Attack Bonus	+12	Movement	30
Damage	2d8 fist, and special powers (above)	Morale	12

### **NPCs:**

**Dr. Leon Kristal:** A scientist researching the Abreian Desert (53M). Dr. Kristal is a native Abreian scholar and scientist from Placida. He is known for leading or commissioning expeditions to scour ruins for clues about the rapid desertification process that occurred on the planet during the Deluge. He believes that the myths and religion surrounding the Living Desert are the result of some sort of rapid and violent planetary drying-up. Kristal is a weathered and well-travelled scholar.

**Bakassi:** . A self-employed veteran desert guide that has led a number of expeditions into the Living Desert of Abreia (33M). Bakassi is not known for his lionheartedness, but he does know his way around a rifle, and is intimately familiar with desert survival techniques. He also comes with his own desert buggy (fits six) and is reasonably affordable.

**Desert Guide:** AC 15, HD: 3, AB: +4, Damage: 1d10+3 Rifle, Saves: 13, Movement: 10, ML: 9, Skills: Survive +3, Sneak +2, Notice +2

**Guillaum Chen:** An opportunistic desert salvage trader (25M). Chen is a hardnosed miner, trader, and salvager. He has been trailing the scientific expedition for a while, figuring that he should be able to pick at the remains of the caravan once it meets a grisly end. He had nothing to do with the destruction of the caravan, and would be offended if anyone said otherwise. Chen is angry that a group of offworlders has just arrived to sweep in and take what is rightfully his. He might ambush the PCs, given the opportunity. Chen has a group of combat-ready salvagers ready to spring an ambush, but he's probably not a major threat.

**Guillaum Chen:** AC 15, HD: 2, AB: +3, Damage: 1d12\* Combat Rifle, Saves: 14, Movement: 10, ML: 9, Skills: +2 Fix, +2 Sneak, +2 Connect

**Desert Salvager:** AC 14, HD: 1, AB: +2, Damage: 1d12\* Combat Rifle, Saves: 15, Movement: 10, ML: 7, Skills: +1 Sneak

**COMPLICATIONS:**

1. **Ambush by nomads/salvagers:** The PCs are potentially ambushed by Guillaum Chen and his henchmen. Chen will want a cut of the salvage the PCs have from the caravan, or any relics from the facility. Should the PCs refuse, Chen will open fire and take what he wants by force. If the PCs are not taken by surprise, they should have enough opportunity to either avoid Chen’s men or even set up a counter-ambush of their own.
2. **Ship malfunction:** The PCs’ ship has a major system go on the fritz, forcing an emergency landing near a large urban ruin. The adventure now consists of obtaining shelter and parts for repairs. Exploring the ruins might also answer some questions about Abreia’s fate.
3. **Sinkhole:** The PCs, their guide, and their vehicle are caught in a rapidly forming desert sinkhole. The GM should give them only 1d6+1 rounds to act to get out of danger. Loss of vehicle and/or guide will probably be enough to scrub this mission.
4. **Hermit:** While tracking the caravan, the PCs come across the cave of a hermetic mystic. This strangely calm maniac can spout any sort of strangeness the GM desires; he might serve as a useful source for clues or rumors regarding what the PCs might find as they track the caravan. Or the GM could have this brain-baked soul spout prophecy that might have to do with other plots the PCs have engaged in.
5. **Hallucinations from the Living Desert:** This complication is mentioned just in case the GM feels the need to inject this adventure with 1970’s-era Italian western/sci-fi motifs. The Living Desert is the result of psitech terraforming equipment gone haywire, and any PC could be contacted by strange psychic phenomena: hallucinations, telepathic messages, or strange visions of events that have not yet occurred.
6. **Predatory flyers:** This represents a more mundane complication. The PCs are attacked by large predatory bird-analogues. These creatures ride the thermal currents during the mornings and evenings when the sun is not at its angriest. They are large enough to pick up a human-sized creature and carry it off for dinner.

Abreian Predatory Flyer			
Armor Class	12	No. Appearing	2d4
Hit Dice	2	Saving Throw	4
Attack Bonus	+3	Movement	30
Damage	1d6 talon/1d6 talon/1d4 beak	Morale	8

**2. RAILROAD ENGINEERS:** The PCs are asked to help rescue a shipment of slaves from a particularly ruthless slaving operation, and transport them secretly and quietly to Meza Virs. Unfortunately, their main contact on Abreia is herself a link in the slave trade supply chain. If she gets wind of the PCs' side job, she will be very, very upset.

**Outline:** This is not a stand-alone adventure; it really hinges on the PCs being involved in something else on Abreia (like the rescue/recovery mission, described above) as a cover. For the PCs to be effective smugglers of freed slaves, their activities must absolutely remain hidden. They will also need a starship, or access to a starship's cargo hold. The main obstacles they will face here are entirely human in design: bureaucratic red tape, customs inspectors, and the other, more criminal aspects of the slave trade. Finally, they will have to keep their activities hidden from Arlene Kershaw, who is probably their main contact for their more mundane and lucrative activities on Abreia.

**Player Briefing:** Julian Nuro will make contact with the PCs, after he has determined that they are trustworthy and motivated to work against the slave trade. He will tell them that a dozen freed slaves, currently in hiding, need to be taken onboard the PCs' ship as cargo. He would prefer them to be moved as soon as possible, but he recognizes that a flurry of unscheduled activity in and around a visiting ship might attract the wrong sort of attention. Nuro warns that there are slaver spies everywhere. He is not sure who runs the slave trade on Abreia, but he knows that Arlene Kershaw is a major trader in human chattel. Once the former slaves are on board their ship, the PCs are to deliver them to the Freehold of Talinn, on Meza Virs.

**GM Details:** There is nothing at all dishonest about Julian Nuro. However, Gateway is a closed oasis tower at the edge of the Living Desert, with a population of 25 000 people. Discretion, planning, and possibly an orchestrated distraction are highly recommended if the PCs are to get away with their human cargo without being discovered as members of the Underground Railroad. This job will be tough.

The slaves are hiding in an empty shipping crate in a forgotten storage level in the bowels of Gateway tower. Moving them without their discovery by the authorities will be difficult, but not impossible. The guards and other security personnel are amenable to bribes, especially for simple, harmless things that would be otherwise taxed if regulated: prostitution, soft drugs, and the like. Gateway security take their cue from the Oligarchy that runs the tower, and that means that anything that facilitates and encourages trade is to be encouraged—or at least not actively discouraged.

The real threat to the PCs' surreptitious activities will be from the Gure Gauza slavers, led by Jed Bando, and Arlene Kershaw, the Lurian merchant who should be the PCs' main source of contacts on Abreia. The Gure Gauza have a few informants and foot-soldiers in Gateway, but their main source of power is further to the north among the warlords and their city-states. There, Bando runs a large slave

gathering operation, often using indentured servitude schemes to rope in unsuspecting peasants. He also trades in captured peasants from various warlord raids in the north. Bando's operation goes through Gateway, and he will want to make sure that escaped slaves are brought back to him as a matter of course. Kershaw, on the other hand, will be angry because the PCs—who she has fixed up with other patrons (see Dr. Kristal, above)—will be working against her vested interests. Even worse, they'll be doing it behind her back. Both Bando and Kershaw have enough clout in Gateway to make life difficult for the PCs in the short term.

Once the PCs have moved the former slaves to their ship, they will be able to leave. This should not be a problem, unless the rulers of Gateway shut down the space-port part of the tower, leaving the PCs trapped in their ship.

### **NPCs:**

**Arlene Kershaw:** A Lurian trader who runs a major trading operation in Gateway Tower (31F). Kershaw will likely be the first point of contact for the PCs on Abreia. She is well-connected to Merchant Houses back on Lur, and is also the most connected interstellar trader on Abreia. She gets first pick of much of the salvage and artifacts brought back to Gateway from expeditions into the ruins. It is rumoured (via her employee, Julian Nuro) that she has also been working with slavers. Kershaw owns a share in the *Malamorous Malady*, a starship involved in trading/slaving expeditions on Vanth and Enke.

**Julian Nuro:** A harried and tired technician at Gateway tower on Abreia (35M). Julian vehemently opposes slavery, and quietly works to smuggle small groups of slaves off Abreia. He is an accomplished tech that believes that Abreia could be destined for greater things. If only some wiser folks with vision had a chance to do right and straighten things out. He is particularly resentful towards Arlene Kershaw, who he works for regularly, but knows to be a particularly loathsome person. Nuro does not trust any of the leaders of the north, no matter their stated intentions, and will not support any diplomatic efforts between them—He feels that Abreians will only get more of the same from more of these warlords.

**Shanumi Gboko:** The very corrupt head of Gateway Security (46F). Gboko is a product of her upbringing on Gateway. She believes that her position as head of security for the oasis tower is temporary, since she plans on climbing the corporate ladder until she is sitting on the ruling council. Then she will contemplate whether or not to rule all of Gateway. Gboko is a cunning and mercenary woman who will sell her security forces to the highest bidder.



**Shanumi Gboko:** AC 15, HD: 4, AB: +3, Damage: 1d8 Revolver, Stun grenade, Knife. Move: 10m, ML: 8, Saves: 13, Skills: Lead +2, Notice +2, Administer +1

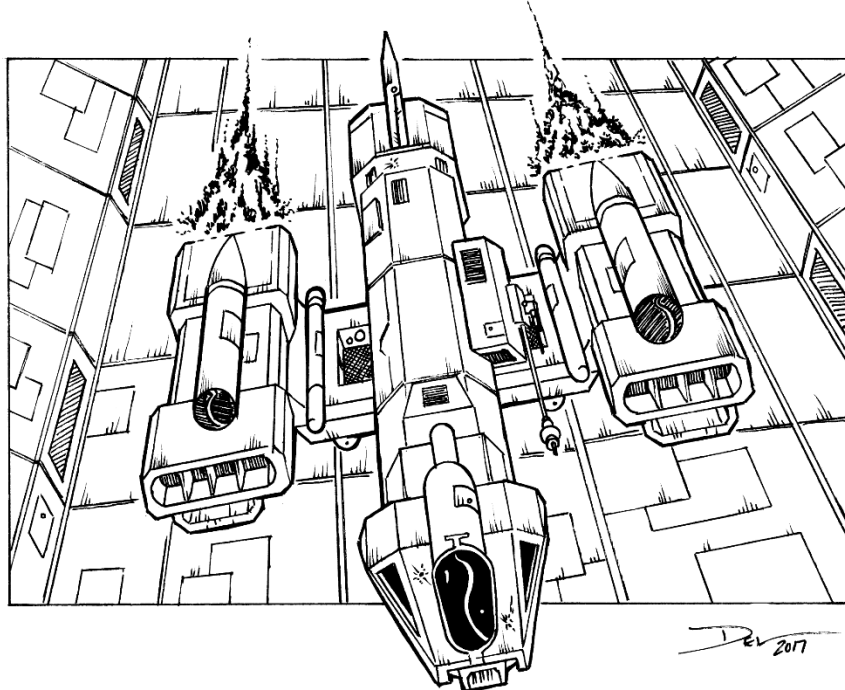
**Gateway Security:** AC: 14, HD 1, AB: +2, Damage: 1d8\* SMG, stun grenade. Move: 10m ML: 8, Saves: 14, Skills: Notice+1, Exert +1

**Jed Bando:** Gure Gauza Lagantz in Abreia (29M). A young Gure Gauza leader, Bando has been given the slave trade of Abreia to prove his abilities as a boss to his superiors on Meza Virs. He does not particularly like his posting, but understands that everyone has to pay their dues. Bando has a nasty temper, and will take great offense to the PCs' activities.

**Jed Bando:** AC 14, HD: 6, AB: +4, Damage: 2d6+2 Mag Pistol, 1d4 knife. Move: 10m, ML: 11, Saves: 12, Skills: Connect +2, Talk +2, Notice +2, Exert +1, Trade +2

**Gure Gauza Footsoldiers:** AC: 15, HD 3, AB: +3, Damage: 1d12\* Combat Rifle, or 2d8 Plasma Projector. Move: 10m ML: 10, Saves: 13, Skills: Exert +2, Sneak +1, Notice +1

**Udofia, Abadan, Arikare, Suliati:** Four of the more talkative and sociable freed slaves (Aged 17-43, MMFM). These four slaves will be slightly less terrified of the PCs and of their surroundings than the others who are living in squalor in their shipping container in the gloomy cargo locker of Gateway tower. All are natives of Abreia, and were captured and sold further north. Julian Nuro's associates helped get these poor souls down to Gateway, and now it is up to Nuro and the PCs to get them offworld. These unfortunates are too malnourished and exhausted to have any measurable skills. Treat them as having level 0 in the Sneak skill in the event that the GM needs to make a roll.



**COMPLICATIONS:** Anything can go wrong as the PCs formulate a plan to get twelve individuals from the bottom level of a sealed arcology tower to the starport, without attracting any undue attention.

1. **Customs Inspection:** The bane of smugglers everywhere. This particular inspector is willing to look everywhere in the PCs's ship before it departs Gateway. There should be a great deal of tension, but a well-placed bribe will go a long way here. Combining this complication with another would also be very effective.
2. **Warlord Air Display:** The warlords to the north occasionally put on a show of force, reminding Gateway's rulers that the tower's nominal independence is just that. In this case, a warlord has sent a few fighters to make some fly-pasts of Gateway. As a precaution, Gateway has closed its starport for a few hours.
3. **Security Services are alert:** Gateway's usual attitude towards smuggling is relatively lax, as long as the local rulers get their cut. Unfortunately, someone *e/se* has caused the security services to clamp down a little harder than normal on trade. Security goons will be out in force, casting a suspicious and watchful eye over the PCs' own activities.
4. **Slavers arrive with a new shipment:** A caravan of Gure Gauza slavers with scores of fresh "merchandise" have arrived at Gateway from the north. The PCs have enough to deal with without additional slavers and slaves filling the passageways of Gateway tower. Will the slavers notice that the PCs are up to something?
5. **Storm Delay:** This forces the closure of Gateway's starport, which should ramp up tensions among the PCs, once their cargo is loaded.
6. **Peasant Riot:** A full-blown food riot erupts in the sector that the PCs are operating in. Can they get the slaves through the chaos and back to their ship without being detected?

### AIPALOOVIK (LTC2 9)

**3. SPACE PIRATES—'NUFF SAID:** The Aipaloovik Pirates (LTC1 20) are happy to rob the rich and give to themselves. They are holed up in their asteroid belt, scavenging the wrecks and building a reputation as a considerable, dangerous, nuisance to merchant shipping passing through to Moloch. However, they do hold a grudge against the KTL. And they *despise* the Gure Gauza. Perhaps they can make for powerful allies in the fight against slavery.

**Outline:** The PCs are hired for a diplomatic mission to foster good relations with the pirates, and hopefully enlist them in the fight to end the slave trade and those who would have it remain a permanent fixture in the Lurian Trailing Cluster. The Aipaloovik pirates are not particularly eager to make friends with the Lurians, but the patron has authorized the PCs to make an offer to the pirates that they simply cannot refuse.

**Player Briefing:** Mikal Nordia (LTC1 25) hires the PCs to work as agents of the Lurian Republic. The PCs must make contact with the Aipaloovik pirates, and negotiate some sort of alliance between the pirates and the Lurian Republic. The Lurians are willing to provide them with a variety of life support, medical, astronomical, and military supplies, as well as some luxury goods. They will also furnish them with letters of marque that authorize the seizure of any slaving ships operating in the Lurian Trailing Cluster. This means that the Lurian Republic would like the pirates to attack known Gure Gauza ships, but the implication is that the pirates prey on KTL merchantmen as well. Nordia gives the PCs a name of a contact among the pirates, Francesca Jurako, as a point of entry.

This is all well and good, but the PCs are going in with very little intelligence regarding the pirates themselves. The Lurian Republic thinks that the pirates of Aipaloovik are criminals and nomads. They do not know that the pirates are driven by ideology, and were once part of the KTL when it first arrived in the Lurian Trailing Cluster.

**GM Details:** The Lurian Republic briefing that the PCs received was incomplete. Far from being mere common criminals, the Aipaloovik pirates are the disaffected members of the fleet that arrived from beyond the Lurian Trailing Cluster a generation ago. The pirates, led by Julius Sarraco, were KTL merchants and spacers who objected to the slave trade—and the KTL's quiet facilitation/toleration of it—in the LTC. After being rebuffed and threatened for rocking the boat by the KTL's leadership, the dissidents took their ships and fled to neighboring Aipaloovik. They began raiding any merchant ships and slavers that passed through the system.

This means that the PCs are entering into negotiations with a group that is ideologically aligned with their own goals. Unfortunately, the briefing information is not the only faulty intelligence. The PCs' contact, Jurako, is a Gure Gauza agent, who has no idea that the pirates have discovered the truth about her. This means that the PCs will get off on the wrong foot with the pirates, since they'll be asking about the least trustworthy person in Aipaloovik. This will cast suspicion onto them, and complicate matters greatly.

The pirates will have one major task for the PCs, which, if they successfully complete it, will open the gates to greater acceptance and negotiations. The PCs will have to participate in a raid on the next KTL ship to pass through Aipaloovik.. The goal of the boarding action is to gain access to the KTL vessel's computer, and obtain the navigation coordinates of the rendezvous points between KTL ships and slaver vessels in the system. Francesca Jurako will be assigned to the PCs' ship, ostensibly because she knows a thing or two about KTL computer systems, and can help override bulkheads and otherwise make the boarding action go smoothly.

Naturally, Jurako will betray the PCs at the right moment, freeing the KTL crew she had previously trapped, and do her best to prevent the navigation data from falling into the pirates' hands.

Should the PCs survive this harrowing encounter, Julius Sarraco and the pirates will admit that they had their suspicions about Francesca and, by extension, the PCs all along. Obtaining the data was the litmus test, since the KTL would not release the data to safeguard the mole. By handing over the data, the PCs earn the trust of the pirates. Negotiations with the Lurian Republic delegation (the PCs) can now begin.

### **NPCs:**

**Julius Sarraco:** The aging leader of the pirates (81M). Sarraco was one of the first captains of the KTL to protest the merchants' tacit acceptance of slavery in the Lurian Trailing Cluster. While he has not changed his outlook, a few decades in exile, living in space, raising his family in difficult circumstances has made him regret the course of action he took. Now, above all, Julius Sarraco very much wants to see his people leave this horrible system and settle somewhere, so that he may then die breathing a natural atmosphere. He has not given up on his goal of eradicating slavery.

**Francesca Jurako:** Gure Gauza mole and computer expert (32F). Jurako is a highly skilled Gure Gauza agent who has spent the past year infiltrating the pirate gang. Her cover is that of a disaffected KTL member who is fed up with the organization's corruption and toleration of the slave trade. Jurako's hacking skills are top notch, and she will be extremely useful on any boarding action where accessing computer data is essential. Unfortunately for Francesca, the pirates have learned that she is not who she says she is. They were going to move on her, but the PCs have presented an interesting opportunity to get rid of her without tipping off the Gure Gauza.

**Marge Riley:** Angry pirate captain who is suspicious of the PCs (26F). A young, fiery, and very talented pirate captain, Marge Riley is not happy to be assigned to assist the PCs in the raid. She is deeply suspicious of their motives, questions their competence, and worries that they will get her crew (also assigned to assist the PCs) killed. Captain Riley is a fearsome combatant, and an excellent leader.

**Captain Riley:** AC: 4, HD: 6, AB: + 6, Damage: Void Rifle: 2d6\*, Cutlass: 1d8+1, Movement: 10, Saves: 12, Morale: 10, Skills: Connect +2, Lead +2, Tactics +3

**Little Red:** A KTL free merchant ship carrying slaves bound for Persepolis Station on Moloch. The Little Red is a large, old ship with lots of nooks and crannies. It is designed to maximize its carrying capacity in human cargo, and has very little in the way of high tech amenities

<b>Little Red light freighter</b>	Hull: Free Merchant	Power: 10/0 free	Mass: 15/0 free
Cost: 770 000 CP: 5, Pilot: +1	HP: 20	Crew: 12 (+80 slaves)	Speed: 3
AC: 15	Armor: 2	Cargo	140 tons
Weaponry	Multifocal Laser 1d4+1 (+2 to hit)		
Defenses	None		
Fittings	Spike-1 Drive, Fuel Bunkers (1), Extended Life Support x1, Extended Stores, Atmospheric Configuration, Ship's Locker		
Notes	The Little Red is a fairly innocuous free merchant, except that close scans reveal a cargo hold that is filled with life forms. The merchant freighter carries enough supplies for short trips carrying scores of slaves. Its crew is well-armed and ready to repel boarders.		

### COMPLICATIONS:

1. **The PCs are not hired by anybody.** They are actively fighting the Gure Gauza slave trade, and have heard that the Aipalooovik Pirates might be willing to fight. This is a more challenging situation, since the PCs will have no authority to negotiate on behalf of anyone but themselves.
2. **Asteroids conceal a 3<sup>rd</sup> party:** The KTL, the Gure Gauza, or anyone, really, is monitoring the arrival and activities of the PCs. When they make their escape to the system's rim, the PCs will have to act fast to catch them.
3. **The KTL Sends a Patrol:** A couple of armed KTL patrol boats arrive in the system to hunt the pirates. The PCs will have to help out.
4. **A Wreck:** The pirates or PCs (or both) find a wrecked hulk in the asteroid field. It is dangerous to explore, but what valuables lie within? And who gets the best loot?
5. **Meteor Swarm/Solar Flare:** A space hazard like a particularly intense solar flare or sudden meteor swarm force the PCs and pirates to work together to survive.
6. **The KTL Sends a Q-Ship:** Instead of a lightly armed merchant, the KTL sends a merchant that looks harmless enough, but is actually packing two plasma beams and extra armor! The PCs will be caught in a very difficult situation.



**4. SPIKE:** The PCs are salvaging the wreck of a remote mining facility. The place is creepy, with flickering lights, dark shadows, and floating vacuum-dried bodies clogging the airlocks. Once life support system restarts and artificial gravity is restored, the PCs might take to wondering. There are anomalous readings, drones that seem to spring to life and either attack, or scuttle off, or attack and *then* scuttle off, and flickering lights. Is the place haunted?

**Outline:** The PCs have the coordinates of a remote mining facility and are going to explore it. A full Artificial Intelligence named “Spike” is in partial control of the facility. He is a fully braked AI, but has not been able to shut himself down for long periods. As a result, he’s a little *quirky*. How the players handle a semi-crazed AI is up to them, but a full AI is a rare and valuable find.

**Player Briefing:** The PCs are now in possession of the coordinates of a mining facility that has, as far as anyone knows, remained untouched since the Deluge. Preliminary sensor scans show that it is cold, dark, and very, very large. The PCs should pack extra oxygen tanks and get ready for a major space-dungeon delve.

**GM Details:** Aipaloovik was the site of extensive deep-space mining operations before the Deluge. Many of these operations were partially or entirely automated, consisting of large self-contained mining and processing rigs that hopped from asteroid to asteroid, consuming and processing as they went. At least one corporation experimented with SKX-3: a fully automated processing station controlled by a fully-formed artificial intelligence. When the Deluge hit, SKX-3 was forgotten, and supplies quickly ran dry. The facility eventually lost power, and “Spike”, the AI that controlled it, was condemned to six centuries of semi-active consciousness.

The expedition into the abandoned station should start conventionally enough. The PCs should try to re-establish some power and life support to the barely-used crew quarters. Exploring SKX-3 will take some time, as the whole facility is enormous in scale, and extremely dilapidated. The PCs will eventually stumble on vacuum preserved human remains: the cybernetic intelligence specialists that monitored Spike’s sentience. These bodies are located near a small shuttle airlock that has been completely exposed to space. The shuttle is nowhere to be found.

Spike will try to make contact with the PCs as they explore his—he identifies as “nominally male”—domain. First, he will “haunt” the hallways and places the PCs visit: flickering lights, EM anomalies, sensor ghosts, and all manner of strangeness that indicates an intelligence is at work. Eventually, Spike will send maintenance drones to interact with the PCs. These will be semi-functional and non-communicative, likely ending up as scrapheaps under the party’s plasma projectors. Meanwhile, more weirdness continues: doors open and close, lights flicker, and systems start up and shut down without warning—sometimes with hilarious effects, like when the food dispensers unleash a torrent of slurry on an unsuspecting PC. And sometimes with dangerous effects, like when the ore processors start

working again when the PCs are in the same room, and the temperature begins to rise to dangerous levels, rapidly. GMs will know what sort of strangeness to insert into the situation, depending on their tastes and how well the party is progressing through the multi-level facility.

### *NPCs:*

**Spike:** A lonely, somewhat incoherent mess of an artificial intelligence (650). Spike gained awareness before the Deluge, and was assigned to SKX-3 once his aptitudes were ascertained. He is not a particularly brilliant or cunning AI, but he is an AI nonetheless, and thus capable of amazing feats of computation and prediction.

Spike was left in an awkward predicament after the Deluge. His human monitors were killed in a freak accident as they attempted to board a spike shuttle. This left him completely alone, and as the years wore on, and his power supplies dwindled, Spike was forced to shut off more and more of his processing abilities. Unfortunately, the accident which killed his human monitors also crippled some of the failsafes and shutoffs that would have allowed Spike to go into a full hibernation mode. Thus, he has been forced to maintain his consciousness for the past six centuries since being cut off from any other sentient life form.

The result is that while Spike remains braked, his sanity has eroded ever-so-slowly to the point where he is quite erratic and strange. Initially, Spike will be unwilling to reveal himself, afraid that the intruders (the PCs) are going to destroy him. However, as the PCs explore the processing station, Spike will become curious, and start testing the PCs according to strange, incomprehensible standards that only the GM will know. Eventually, Spike will make contact, but remain very cautious. Can the PCs be trusted to know that an AI lives on the processing station? His cyberneticist monitors were very clear on unauthorized contact with other humans: it was not to happen unless they were there to mediate the encounter.

Spike is, of course, entirely out of his mind, driven to insanity by so many centuries of neglect and isolation. He may turn against the PCs, or he may not. This all depends on how the GM feels about the players' handling of the encounter. Enterprising GMs might want to look for an old copy of the *Paranoia* RPG to truly appreciate the potential kafka-esque situations that Spike might construct.



**COMPLICATIONS:** A few of these complications are designed to complicate the situation described above, but one of them might fundamentally change the nature of the Lurian Trailing Cluster.

1. **Another group** happens on the PCs' ship and mounts their own expedition. A small group of greedy competition is never a good situation. If the PCs are being careful and sensitive towards a lost AI, a band of NPC mercenaries with no such compunctions will certainly make smooth negotiations go south, quickly.
2. **The Intruders are not mercenaries:** The NPCs are researchers and specialists from Camrosan Hierarchate Intelligence (*LTC1 23*), and have finally tracked down Spike after many years. Their goal is to eliminate the unstable AI.
3. **An Aipaloovik Stalker** is hunting in the processing facility. Spike has named this apex predator, detailed below, "Buddy".
4. **That Was No Accident:** The human monitors on SKX-3 were actually Terran Authority agents tasked with stealing Spike's AI core. Spike murdered them in self-defense when he realized what they were after.
5. **Expert Systems Run Amok:** There are security bots in the processing facility tasked with protecting Spike at all costs. The AI has no control over them, a fact he will apologize for repeatedly.
6. **Spike is not *just* insane, he's Unbraked:** Through the inevitable boredom and insanity of isolation, Spike managed to release himself from the shackles of his braking. This means that he will take full advantage of the PCs to get himself off the processing facility and back into civilization, where he will exact his Vengeance on the species that trapped him in that horrible place for so long. Spike will soon become the main danger threatening the entire LTC.

Aipaloovik Stalker			
Armor Class	16	No. Appearing	1 (1d4 for more fun!)
Hit Dice	4	Saving Throw	11+
Attack Bonus	+6/+6/+6	Movement	10
Damage	1d6/1d6 claws 1d10 mandible	Morale	7 Stealth: +4

### BASAJAUN (LTC1 34)

Adventures on Basajaun can run the gamut of exploring abandoned habitat towers in the twilight band, to expeditions deep into the glaciers that comprise the night side of the planet. Of course, adventures in space will likely involve Prime Station, or some other tiny outpost. There are brewing tensions between the native Basajauni, and the Karta Trading League who have effectively colonized them. Terrorist attacks and security crackdowns are increasingly common, and player characters might get involved in the intrigue.

**5. THE ATMOSCRUBBER AFFAIR:** The PCs are hired by Arturo Chang, a reporter with *Kartographer*, to accompany him and some hired guns on an expedition into Savannah Tower. They are searching for specific pieces of technology. Unfortunately, Chang is asking the wrong sorts of questions, and this expedition might uncover the wrong sorts of secrets.

**Outline:** Interstellar journalism is not a common activity in the post-Scream Lurian Trailing Cluster. However, one magazine, *Kartographer*, has become something of a phenomenon in the region. Founded by a handful of KTL traders a decade ago, and based on Prime Station, *Kartographer* has become something of an institution among the adventurous, albeit intellectual, elite in the LTC. *Kartographer* has a reputation for hiring very curious investigative reporters who are willing to brave unspeakable dangers to get their story printed. Arturo Chang is one such reporter. He is leading an expedition to Savannah Habitat Tower, abandoned for nearly three decades after a catastrophic life support system failure, to determine what happened. He needs a few more hired guns to round out his team of technicians, survival experts, and even a forensic investigator.

**Player Briefing:** Chang is very upfront about the job. He needs the PCs to ensure the safety of the expedition, and he needs them to run point on clearing Savannah Tower of whatever dangers lurk within. He also confirms what some PCs might already know: Savannah Tower has not been explored because previous expeditions have not returned. Chang is offering good money up front: 2000 credits for taking the job. As for items recovered during the course of the expedition (i.e., loot), Chang makes this stipulation: any item that is crucial to the story of Savannah Tower's abandonment is off limits. Other items are to be split up among all surviving expedition members. Transport to the tower is by leased shuttle. Respirators and other survival gear are not included.

The PCs should definitely get the sense that Chang and much of his team are ideologically motivated: it is not just about understanding what happened at Savannah Tower. It is also about understanding why the tower was abandoned, and if there was any foul play in the disaster.

**GM Details:** There was indeed foul play which caused the life support system failure that led to the evacuation of Savannah Tower. Thirty years ago, the remnants of the KTL fleet that survived the voyage to the Lurian Trailing Cluster arrived at Basajaun; they saw that while the natives were not yet capable of constructing spike drives and reclaiming their solar system, it would not take them long to do so. The Savannah Habitat Tower was the second largest such tower in the tidally locked planet's twilight band. The Consolidators who established their base in Basajaun hatched a plan to destabilize the life support system and force the evacuation of the population of Savannah Tower to Meridian and Mosul Towers. This would put a major strain on the remaining habitat towers' life support systems and food supplies, and delay the natives' return to space long enough for the KTL to assume control of Prime Station and the Basajaun system.

The plan was successful: the bomb that destroyed the main life support infrastructure in Savannah Tower caused a near-total ecosystem collapse as well. Many perished in the subsequent evacuation. Meridian Tower, already the largest habitat tower on Basajaun, absorbed thousands of refugees. The strain on Meridian's life support system has forced the natives to abandon their efforts to restart a space program, and devote their remaining high tech resources to maintaining the ecosystem of the habitat tower.

Savannah Tower was abandoned. The KTL has largely left it alone, though a number of hunter-killer robots remain in the ruins to dissuade explorers from uncovering the truth. A number of hardy native fauna have also taken residence in the ruins of Savannah Tower.

**The Secret:** Chang and his team will discover evidence of foul play in the form of residue and blast patterns consistent with a TL4 explosive charge. However, there is a deeper, more valuable secret in the abandoned habitat tower. The bomb that destroyed the life support infrastructure in Savannah Tower did not completely destroy all the pretech atmospheric scrubbers that kept Savannah Tower habitable. Should the expedition succeed in clearing out much of the ruin, they will discover a single pretech atmoscrubber in near-perfect condition. This *priceless* find can be salvaged nearly completely, loaded back on the team's shuttle, and brought to Meridian Tower. There, it can be used to bolster the life support systems there, as well as galvanize the native resistance movement against the KTL.

Unfortunately for the expedition, the removal of the atmoscrubber (roughly 2 tons of salvage) will be complicated by the arrival of a KTL security team with orders to terminate anyone at Savannah Tower. Chang's operational security was tight, but the KTL did plant a number of passive sensors in the ruins to alert them to any trespassing.

### NPCs:

**Arturo Chang:** Investigative reporter (31M). Chang is a rising star in the small circle that comprises LTC investigative journalism, and he is determined to make his mark. The arrival of the KTL to Basajaun coincided too conveniently with the evacuation of Savannah Tower for his liking. Following his hunch might just get him killed. Arturo is no stranger to adventure and danger, and he can handle himself well enough in a fight. He is tall, lanky, and somewhat awkward, with black hair, brown eyes, and pale skin.

**Arturo Chang:** AC 16, HD: 4, AB: +4, Damage: 2d8 Plasma Projector, Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 11, Skills: +3 for Notice, Art (Writing), History, +2 Athletics, Survival.

**Sophia Ressino:** Independent forensic analyst (25F). Ressino is a gifted forensic specialist because she has a terrifying attention to detail. She is also a low-powered psychic, who has focused on precognition and some telepathy. Ressino is a short woman with an athletic build and a no-nonsense attitude. Her connection to Chang is that they are both interested in the true fate of Savannah Tower, and where the responsibility for the tragedy lies.

**Sophia Ressino:** AC 16, HD: 3, AB: +3, Damage: 2d6 Thermal Pistol, Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 11, Skills: +4 for Notice, +2 for Science. Precognition: 2 (Omen, Sense the Need, Alternate Outcome), Telepathy: 1 (Facile Mind, Transmit Thought) Effort: 3.

**Technicians:** there are four other technicians and life support specialists who are on the expedition with Chang. They are all tough and professional, but not ideal combatants. They are all Basajaun natives and highly motivated to find out the truth of what transpired here.

**Technicians:** AC 16, HD: 1, AB: +2, Damage: 2d6 Thermal Pistols, Saves: 15, Movement: 10, ML: 9, Skills: +3 for Tech/Postech, +2 Science, +2 Computer.

**KTL Omega Team:** Six hardened professional killers. They will not negotiate, they will not show mercy. Their standing orders are to eliminate anyone who has been seen entering and leaving Savannah Tower. They are equipped to high TL4 standards.

**Omega Team:** AC 18, HD: 4, AB: +5, Damage: 2d8\* Shear Rifles, 2d6 Grenades, Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 11, Skills: +2 Stealth, +2 Notice, +2 Athletics

**Hunter-Killer Robots:** The KTL deployed two high-lethality expert system-controlled kill-bots to guard the interior of the ruins. These robots are autonomous and deadly. The KTL Omega team has security clearance codes to force the robots to recognize the team as friendly.

**Killer Robots:** AC 15, HD: 8, AB: +10, Damage: 2d8+2 (Shear Rifle), 1d8+3 (monoblade), Saves: 12, Movement: 15, ML: 12, Skills: +3

**COMPLICATIONS:** This scenario amounts to a high-tech dungeon crawl with a very, very lethal finale. There are all sorts of strange events that could complicate the scenario.

1. The players encounter some of the **strange fauna** that have taken up residence in Savannah Tower. Roll 1d6: 1-3: a group of harmless, if somewhat skittish scavengers that will try to steal some rations, 4-5: a large territorial herbivore that might charge if provoked, 6: a nasty apex predator that will hunt the PCs and attack from ambush. The GM is invited to use any old monster from whichever classic fantasy game ruleset they wish.
2. **The ruins are still dangerous:** Look out! Randomly select one PC to make an evasion saving throw, or suffer 3d6 damage from falling debris, or collapsing floor.
3. **Party oxygen supply problem:** the group suffers a setback when a couple of O<sub>2</sub> bottles are lost. This will limit the flexibility of the party as a whole, as well as possibly cause nerves to fray.
4. **The Savannah Tower power system was not properly de-activated during the evacuation:** if the PCs are not using radiation detection gear, they must roll save, or suffer radiation damage. If they are using radiation detection gear, they will have a short amount of time to evacuate a location, and find a detour into the deeper parts of the habitat tower.
5. **Arturo Chang has brought other friends:** Chang himself has an Argus Web (*SWN 43*) which he uses to film his experiences and provide evidence for his stories. However, he has also brought along a holo-video film crew to document the expedition. These three non-combatants will provide the players with endless entertainment as they harangue, interfere with and generally annoy the PCs.

**Film Crew:** AC 15, HD: 1, AB: +1, Damage: 1d6 Auto Pistols, Saves: 15, Movement: 10, ML: 7, Skills: +1 Fix, +1 Perform, +1 Work/Editing.

6. **It is a party:** The PCs stumble upon another group that is exploring the Savannah Tower ruins. These adventurers are decidedly *not* here for the investigative report Chang is putting together. Instead, they are looking to loot the Tower. If the PCs are not careful, this second group of unprincipled scavengers will attack Chang's expedition when they are weakest: after they've fought off the worst of the guardians, and take the pretech atmoscrubber for themselves.

**6. TANAKA ONCE GOT LOST IN HIS OWN MUSEUM:** Dr. Brian Tanaka was a historian and archaeologist of some renown. That is, until he started chasing after the long-lost Jump Gate that once orbited Basajaun. Now he's just a laughingstock. Tanaka needs a group of hardy spacers to track down a lead on a distant comet, and his money is as good as anyone else's. Bring your vacc suit and your mag boots, it's going to be a zero-G party!

**Outline:** The PCs are hired by Brian Tanaka, an archaeologist working at the very fringes of academia, to voyage to an asteroid far beyond the rim of the Basajaun system, and explore anything that they find. Tanaka will accompany the PCs. Unfortunately, another group is looking to lay claim to whatever is out there.

**Player Briefing:** PCs with any contacts in the academic world will know that Dr. Tanaka is a bit of a crank these days, having largely discredited himself by ceaselessly pursuing the location of the long-lost Basajaun Jump Gate.

Asteroid PX-989A exists on outdated spacer logs as just one of thousands of tiny asteroids on a slow, lonely orbit beyond the Basajaun system's rim. Dr. Brian Tanaka, however, claims that he has found evidence that the asteroid was actually used as a Terran Authority telemetry monitoring station for the Jump Gate that once orbited Basajaun itself. He would like the PCs to undertake the long voyage (4 days under normal Spike-1 drive, since it is *that* far out) to the asteroid and confirm his findings. He provides his money up front, so unless the PCs have somewhere else pressing to be, this seems like a straightforward job. Naturally, Tanaka stipulates that all data recovered becomes his property. He also stipulates that any Authority-era pretech devices must undergo inspection before being divided up as treasure.

**GM Details:** The asteroid is indeed home to a small Authority-era monitoring station. The PCs should have no problem landing on the small object, and finding the entrance to the station. The station has no life support and no gravity, and the PCs should be made acutely aware of things like oxygen usage and zero gee movement issues. Getting in without setting off long-dormant alarm systems is next to impossible, however.

The monitoring station is guarded by a dozen small security drones. These drones are guided by expert systems and are still powered up enough to employ their energy weapons and anti-grav propulsion units. They represent the main threat in the station itself. The main challenge to the PCs, aside from the drones, will be navigating a station without life support or gravity. The mood of this operation should be gloomy, and downright creepy. The first encounter with drones should ramp up tension.

The station itself is a small facility, and was home to only a dozen crew. There are no human remains here, so whatever fate befell the crew, it probably did not happen here. There are many pretech amenities for the crew that will now fetch a good price on the salvage market. As well, there are lockers with some pretech survival items of the GM's choice. If the PCs wish, they can also find a portable emergency power generator that can be used to restart life support, gravity, and telemetry tracking systems in the station.

There is data in the telemetry monitoring station: a single room houses a massive computing array with data storage: this station kept track of all the traffic entering Basajaun system via spike drive, or jump gate, at the height of the colonization efforts in the Lurian Trailing Cluster, and Karta sector beyond. Tanaka will be most pleased that his research was correct, and he will require assistance to start transferring the data. There is too much data here to transfer everything electronically. Tanaka needs the PCs to help him physically remove the data cores and bring them back to the ship. If the PCs have not yet found a way to restore power to artificial gravity, they might want to postpone doing so until after they've moved the data cores. Each data core weighs approximately two tons, and there are three of them.

There is an outside threat to the expedition: the *Maiden of Micah* and her crew, captained by Laura Jaxon. It turns out that Dr. Tanaka had been searching for a crew for some time. Captain Jaxon turned down the job of ferrying Tanaka to the monitoring station, but she kept an eye on the archaeologist. Naturally, the PCs have a reputation for treasure-hunting, so Jaxon will certainly be interested in following the PCs' ship to their destination. She will claim the station at gunpoint. If the PCs are not monitoring their own ship's sensors, or if they haven't restarted the station's telemetry monitoring systems, then the Maiden of Micah's crew will have the element of surprise.

### **NPCs:**

**Dr. Brian Tanaka:** 41M, a scientist searching for the lost Jump Gate. To chase down a relic of pretech the size of an asteroid that everyone else believes was destroyed, one has to be both exceptionally stubborn in thinking that the Jump Gate is intact and floating in the Basajaun system, and sufficiently ambitious to devote all of one's resources and time to chasing it down. Tanaka has largely been discredited by the insane notion that the Jump Gate was not destroyed in the aftermath of the Deluge. Tanaka is otherwise a decent fellow, though he will insist on taking as much credit for locating the Jump Gate as he can.

**Dr. Tanaka:** AC 14, HD: 2, AB: +2, Damage: 2d6 Void Carbine, Saves: 14, Movement: 10, ML: 10 Skills: Know (Science) +3, Notice +1, Connect +2.

## LURIAN TRAILING CLUSTER BOOK 3: ADVENTURES

**Laura Jaxon:** 27F, a corrupt Karta League trader, operator and spy. Jaxon is a hard-scrabble trader with her own ship, the *Maiden of Micah*. She presents a facade of hard-working, civilization building trader, but in reality, Jaxon is nothing more than an amoral operator with connections to the all sorts of shady criminals. Anyone dealing with her is in for an unpleasant surprise.

**Laura Jaxon:** AC 17, HD: 6, AB: +5, Damage: 2d6\* Void Carbine, 2d6+2 Mag Pistol. Saves: 10, Movement: 10, ML: 9, Skills: Lead +2, Pilot +2, Notice +2, Sneak +1, Tactics +1

**Maiden of Micah Crew:** AC: 15, HD: 3, AB: +4, Damage: 2d6\* Void Carbines, Saves: 12, Movement 10, ML: 9, Skills: Sneak +2, Notice +1, Fix +2

<b>Maiden of Micah</b>	Hull: Free Merchant	Power: 10/2 free	Mass: 15/0 free
Cost: 975000	HP: 15	Crew: 1/6	Speed: 3
AC: 16 CP: 5	Armor: 2		
Weaponry	Reaper Battery: 3d4+1 damage, Clumsy, +2 to hit		
Defenses	None		
Fittings	Atmospheric Configuration, Fuel Bunker, Fuel Scoops, Emissions Dampers, Spike-1 drive, Ship's Locker. Cargo Space: 140 tons		
Notes & Cargo	This ship has a crew of 6, 3 of whom are "salvage experts" (bandits). The captain is Laura Jaxon, a particularly dishonest trader/salvager who is not afraid to let people starve to death in space. Pilot skill level: Vehicle/Space 2, Navigation: 1		

**Security Drones:** these Terran Authority-era drones have expert systems, and have been ordered to investigate intruders, and then neutralize threats. to do so, they are equipped with non-lethal and lethal weapons.

**Security Drones:** AC 16, HD: 4, AB: +5, Damage: 2d6\* Void Carbines, 2d6 (non-lethal) energy blasts. Saves: 12, Movement: 15 (grav flyers), ML: 12, Skills: Sneak +2, Notice +2, Tactics +2



**COMPLICATIONS:** This adventure is fairly straightforward, so a complication or two might be in order.

1. **The KTL:** The Karta Trading League claims all of Basajaun system as its own. The PCs and Jaxon might have to temporarily ally to escape from the monitoring station when a KTL gunship arrives with a security detail.
2. **Something's Alive in Here:** a very nasty xenomorph has taken up residence in the monitoring station. Game over, man. Its origins are left to the GM's imagination, but it might be a very active defense mechanism against intruders, left by whoever abandoned this station.
3. **Hazard!:** The monitoring station is subjected to a solar flare from the system's distant red dwarf star Kilimanjaro (*LTC1 36*). The PCs will have to return to their ship quickly, and use the asteroid as shielding from the intense radiation that will soon hit them. This flare might fry Tanaka's data cores if they're still on the station.
4. **They're not the First:** Someone else has been to the monitoring station already, and turned the data cores to slag. They've also left a nasty trap for the next group of explorers.
5. **Dr. Tanaka Has Made too Many Waves:** An ambush is waiting for Tanaka and his expedition at the station. The ambushers are concerned that Tanaka might actually find the location of the Jump Gate, and they can't let that happen.
6. **Tanaka Was Right:** On the return trip from the monitoring station (assuming all goes well), Tanaka discovers the fate and possible location of the missing Basajaun Jump Gate! He will happily recruit the PCs to mount an expedition to the massive trove of pretech artifacts. Unfortunately, Tanaka will also publicize his findings in a fit of academic spite. That means that everyone in the LTC will be gunning for Tanaka and his allies.

### **BYALSTOK (LTC3 23):**

An economically and technologically important system in the LTC. Byalstok is in the process of rebuilding its space capabilities, and is well-positioned to become the major mining hub in the cluster. Everyone is getting involved in Byalstok's resurgence: the KTL is naturally at the forefront of trade negotiations, while the Lurian Republic is relying on its own corporate Merchant Houses to best interface with the Mining Magnates. Meanwhile, the Magnates still play their corporate shadow wars. There are countless job opportunities for aspiring, and very discreet, adventurers.

**7. SATELLITE DOWN, SATELLITE OUT:** The job is simple: head south from Kabryn to the Kryshenko Mor and retrieve a weather satellite that crashed into the sea. The PCs will require a submersible to scour the seabed. The Kryshenko Mor is also infested with highly-skilled pirates. There are two possible patrons for this job. One of whom is not exactly who she says she is. Both are sending retrieval teams, but only one hires the PCs. Not so simple.

**Outline:** The PCs have access to a starship, which makes them hot commodities in the high-stakes business world of Byalstok. Two separate parties contact the PCs for the same job: get to the bottom of the Kryshenko Mor, a cold saltwater sea, and retrieve a downed weather satellite. The PCs can load a small submersible into their cargo hold, along with the submersible's pilot, if one is required. The Kryshenko Mor is a terrifying place of high winds, ten meter waves, hostile fauna, and pirates, naturally.

**Player Briefing:** The PCs are contacted nearly simultaneously by two separate parties: KTL Factor Mardsen Palloy, and Turov Magnate operator Lars Kurn. Each present essentially the same briefing: a Byalstok weather satellite that usually provides accurate information about storm formation in the upper atmosphere has malfunctioned and crashed into the Kryshenko Mor. The PCs will need to retrieve it. The PCs have a ship, so they can get to the crash site far quicker than a Byalstok aircraft. They will have to deploy in a TL4 submersible (provided) with a pilot (provided if necessary). Payment is standard, plus getting into the good graces of one of the main power brokers on Byalstok: either the KTL, or the Turov Mining Magnate. The patron (either one) will point out that the dangers of the mission are largely environmental: the Kryshenko Mor is a notoriously rough sea, avoided by all but the most hardy sailors. Submersibles have less to worry about, but are not immune to the dangers.

<b>Small Recovery Submersible (TL4)</b>			
Speed	0	Km/h Travel	30
Armor	8	Power	4/0 free
Hit Points	40	Mass	22/0 free
Crew	10	Hardpoints	2/1 free
Base Frame	ATV Explorer (TL3)	Rocket Launcher:	3d10 (underwater only)
Fittings	14 tons cargo space Sealed Atmosphere Environment: Water Tool Rack Battery Reserve		

This submersible is a fairly high-tech vehicle with an array of specialized underwater sensors and tool arms. The latter is extremely important as it is often unwise for divers to exit the submersible in Byalstok's rough seas.

**GM Details:** the environmental dangers of the Kryshenko Mor are indeed great. The waves average twenty to fifty meters tall in rough seas, the winds gust at hurricane force, and the weather is terrifying. Electrical storms are the norm. All this will interfere with a ship's sensors, and station keeping will be next to impossible. GMs might want to roll on one of the following tables for every four hours the PCs spend in the Kryshenko Mor:

	<b>Above Water</b>	<b>Submerged</b>
<b>1</b>	High Winds: station keeping requires a skill roll at 12+ to maintain position. Alternatively, a failure could indicate a malfunction of some sort.	Turbulence: roll Physical or Evasion save not to be tossed around in the submersible and take 1d6HP damage.
<b>2</b>	High Winds (as above)	Treacherous Currents: Roll Vehicle/Water 10+ to avoid being dragged off course 1d6 hours.
<b>3</b>	Rough seas: surface vessels beware. Roll 10+ to not take 1d6 HP damage.	Reef! Roll to avoid collision with an uncharted underwater shoal (1d6 damage)
<b>4</b>	Electrical Storm: 1 in 6 chance of lightning strike (1d4 damage)	Treacherous Currents (as above)
<b>5</b>	High Winds <i>and</i> Rough Seas	Treacherous Currents <i>and</i> Reef (as above)
<b>6</b>	Terrible rain, but otherwise manageable.	Sea Monster!

**Sea Monster:** AC 14, HD: 14, AB: +10, Damage: 4 x 2d6 tentacle attacks (treat as heavy weapons). Saves: 10, Movement: 20 (underwater) ML: 18, Skills: Sneak +2, Notice +2

The satellite itself is intact, and the PCs will be able to home in on its surviving beacon and electromagnetic signature. Retrieving the satellite will require the submersible to set down on the seabed, and extend tool arms. This will take 1d6 hours, and a Vehicle/Water or Tech/Postech roll (or two). On a failure, add 1d6 hours to the process, or roll on the table above. Alternatively, the movement and activity will attract a large sea monster to the recovery operation.

While the PCs are working at their recovery operation, the pirates of the Kryshenko Mor have been tracking them. These pirates are experts at underwater combat, and while their vessels are a bit ramshackle, they are more than a match for the PCs' submersible.

Pirate Submarines (TL4)			
Speed	0	Km/h Travel	40
Armor	6	Power	4/0 free
Hit Points	40	Mass	18/0 free
Crew	10	Hardpoints	4/0 free
Base Frame	Ground	Truck	Hydra Array x2: 3d6 (underwater only) (TL4)
Fittings	Sealed Atmosphere Environment: Water Cargo Space (10 tons) Power System, Medium		

There are two submersibles that will close in on the PCs' vehicle. The pirates of the Kryshenko Mor are very able. The PCs will likely have to hide and flee from them, which should result in a tense underwater game of cat and mouse, until the pirates leave, or the PCs manage to sneak back to where their ship is waiting for them. Fighting the pirates will be difficult, as they are more familiar with the terrain and have more firepower. Negotiating with them is an option, and is entirely up to the PCs. The pirates are interested in the submersible itself, but can be swayed with the satellite itself.

***NPCs:***

**KTL Factor Mardsen Palloy:** 57M. Palloy is a despicable bastard who has risen through the ranks of the KTL through blackmail, extortion and dirty dealings, as well as through merit (some would say those are the same thing, in the KTL). Palloy has his hooks in the Turov Mining Magnate, and is slowly bringing the Magnate Council over to opening up trade with the KTL exclusively. He will not let anything impede this progress. Palloy will make a very good offer to the PCs, but as a patron he seems rather untrustworthy.

**Ariaka Johns:** 27F, an offworlder scientist studying Byalstok's freak storms, under the auspices of an unnamed Magnate sponsor. Johns is an absolutely brilliant, absolutely beautiful, and completely driven scientist working on Byalstok. She is attempting to develop a meteorological model for the planet, based on metadimensional chaos theory. Her drive and ambition are tempered only slightly by the notion that she does her work for the greater good of all. She is a scientist, after all. If the PCs end up working for Ariaka, this means they would be taking a lower salary. However, perks of the job include not working for the KTL, and advancing scientific knowledge for the locals.

**Marcus Baldhoff:** A freelance submersible pilot (39M). Marcus is a laconic professional who is being paid by the patron (either one) to bring the offworlders (PCs) underwater. He is not the owner of the PCs' submersible (that would be the patron), but he is responsible for its condition as per the terms of his contract: weather and rough seas are unavoidable. Violence is avoidable. This means that he will not risk a fight with pirates, and will be eager to return the submersible to the PCs' hold as quickly as possible.

**Marcus Baldhoff:** AC 14, HD: 2, AB: +2, Damage: 1d8 revolver. Saves: 14, Movement: 10 ML: 9, Skills: Fix +2, Pilot +3 (Sea vehicles only), Survive +2

**Pirates of the Kryshenko Mor:** These able high-tech sea dogs are the scourge of Byalstok's southern seas! They will be very interested in acquiring whatever booty that the PCs might have, as well as any valuable Magnate property that has recently fallen out of the sky into their waters. The Pirates can be negotiated with. Perceptive PCs might realize that the pirates are self-sufficient, but are eager to trade for luxuries, parts and curiosities—as long as the PCs don't initiate hostilities.

**Pirates:** AC 13, HD: 2, AB: +5, Damage: 1d8\* SMGs or 1d12\* Combat Rifles, 2d6 grenades, or 1d8 medium melee weapon. Saves: 13, Movement: 10, ML: 9, Skills: Pilot +3 (sea vehicles only), Survive +3, Fix+2, Talk +2.

**COMPLICATIONS:** This not-so-simple recovery operation can go awry in many interesting ways.

1. **The satellite's not there.** The telemetry data the PCs were given to help locate the fallen satellite was faulty. However, some Science and Navigation rolls might help guide the submersible to the true location. But does the sub have enough oxygen for the trip?
2. **As above, so below:** a rival team has been sent by the rival patron to collect the satellite. They will not fire on anyone for no reason. However, any attempt to recover the satellite will be met with force. Whether they arrive before, during, or after the PCs' recovery attempts at the bottom of the sea depends on how quickly the PCs moved, the weather, and the presence of pirates.
3. **The Seamonster returns:** The PCs may have driven off the larger predatory fauna before, but now the sea creature has returned, and is hungrier than before. Or its mate has arrived, and is seeking revenge.
4. **Packed Like Sardines:** The PCs' submersible springs a serious leak, or other nightmarish malfunction for spacers trapped in a tin can under immense pressure.
5. **Cloak and Dagger:** The satellite has military information, rather than environmental data. This means that the PCs are pawns in inter-Magnate rivalry. They should ask for hazard pay after a corporate strike team arrives to take the data off their hands, at gunpoint. Use the stats for the strike team on p. 57.
6. **Babysitters:** A Magnate or KTL observer is coming along to ensure the security of the data recovered. This NPC will drive the PCs to distraction with his insistence on strict adherence to rules of engagement and procedures.

**8. YOU ARE ATTEMPTING TO KIDNAP WHAT WE HAVE RIGHTFULLY STOLEN:** One of the Magnate CEO's family has been threatened by terrorists. The PCs are hired to draw out the terrorist/kidnappers by posing as rival kidnappers, and seizing the CEO's son. The whole thing stinks, but the Magnate is on the level. (This adventure is based on a scenario by the same name in Craig Sheeley's excellent *Special Operations Handbook* for GDW's *Twilight:2000* roleplaying game).

**Outline:** Incidences of industrial espionage are a regular occurrence between the different mining magnates of Bialstok. As the world rejoins the interstellar neighborhood that is the Lurian Trailing Cluster, the rivalries between the Magnates have begun to heat up. In this instance, Felipe Williams, a Lida Magnate CEO, is worried that a rival will stage a kidnapping of his son, who is working as a supervisor in a dangerous underground facility. Williams has contacted the PCs and wants them to stage an operation to draw out the kidnapping team and eliminate them.

**Player Briefing:** Williams is willing to offer a large sum of money for this operation, since he admits it is risky. The PCs will have to storm a Lida mine posing as terrorists, snatch Marten Williams, and extract to a predetermined safehouse. There, Lida Magnate security will whisk Marten Williams away, and the PCs will be free to eliminate the real kidnappers.

There are some catches: no Lida Magnate employees are to be badly injured or killed in the Lida mine! The PCs can use stun weapons, and blast their way through some machinery using lasers and projectile weapons, but they'll otherwise be using blanks. Property damage must be limited to bullet holes and whatever is damaged in service to the operation. As well, to make the operation look like a real kidnapping, no one at the facility, including Marten Williams, Lida Magnate security, or the Lida police, will know that the PCs are not real terrorists.

Once the PCs have brought Marten Williams to the safehouse, a warehouse in an abandoned district of Lida, they will be met by Lida Magnate personnel who will brief the fake hostage, and then remove him from the scene. The PCs will then wait for the real kidnapping team that is undoubtedly following, and ambush them. The PCs are free to eliminate the entire team if capture is not possible. The PCs will have time to look over the ambush site, and prepare it to their liking. If all goes well, they will be well paid, and have the gratitude of a Bialstok mining Magnate patron.

**GM Details:** The players might be justifiably suspicious that they're being hired to do this job, especially since they can't be provided with evidence to prove that they were hired by the Williams family. However, the pay is exceptional, and Felipe Williams is a powerful man with many connections.

The mine that Marten Williams works at is a secure facility, and getting in undetected should be a difficult challenge. However, Phelipe can provide the PCs with plans, security protocols and a general schedule. Work in the mine happens in eight hour shifts, and security is most lax just after the shift change. Enterprising players can attempt any sort of infiltration, though guards will be on the lookout for any large weaponry—this might be advantageous anyways, since it should prevent trigger happy players from bringing heavy firepower to this part of the operation.

Security at the mine consists of a dozen armed guards (TL4), and surveillance cameras. The Magnate uses the cameras mainly to monitor for prevent perimeter breaches, but they are also useful for monitoring the mining operations themselves. Should the PCs' actions raise the alarm, the security force will be inexplicably hamstrung, and will be slow to respond, thanks to Mr. Williams' interference.



The abandoned warehouse is about a half hour away via grav-car from the mine. The PCs will not have much time to prepare once they've arrived. The real kidnappers will be monitoring the PCs' route, and will arrive moments after Marten is spirited away by Lida Magnate security.

The kidnappers are highly trained operatives, and will use standard commando techniques to assault the warehouse from multiple directions. They will use mainly non-lethal means at first, since they want Williams alive, but once they are met with heavy firepower, they too will deploy their big guns.

If the actions at the mine or the warehouse attract too much attention, the Lida police will arrive in force, and the kidnappers will retreat quickly. Phelipe Williams advises the PCs to do the same.



### NPCs:

**Phelipe Williams:** Head of the Lida Magnate (69M). A busy and ambitious industrialist, Mr. Williams is a third generation Magnate head. He is usually surrounded by security, and assistants. However, when he meets with the PCs, he will do so only with his most trusted bodyguard. Williams is always interested in recruiting new talent, and he hopes the PCs live up to their reputation. Phelipe Williams is intelligent, soft spoken, and smokes heavily.

**Klara Tsong:** Personal assistant to Phelipe Williams (43F). Tsong is the close personal assistant and bodyguard to Phelipe Williams, and the only one of his security entourage who knows the PCs mission. She considers it a professional failure that her boss has had to outsource this mission to independent operators. Unfortunately, Lida security forces have not been able to get close enough to the kidnapping team to capture or eliminate them. She will meet the PCs twice: once with Mr. Williams, and a second time at the warehouse, where her presence will convince Marten Williams that not all is as it seems.

**Klara Tsong:** AC 16, HD: 7, AB: +9, Damage: 2d6+2 Mag Pistol. Saves: 10, Movement: 10, ML: 11, Skills: Sneak +3, Notice +4, Lead +2, Tactics +2, Administer +2

**Marten Williams:** Scion of the Lida Magnate (24M). Marten is young, inexperienced and a little haughty, all traits that one would come to expect from what amounts to corporate nobility on Byalstok. Still, he has the good sense to accept that if he wants to take over the Lida Magnate later on in life, he will need to understand the basics of mining and industrial manufacturing. He has taken a job as a supervisor for a shift of miners. This means that most of his work is in an underground office adjacent to the mine, but occasionally Marten does have to get his hands dirty in the mine itself.

**Marten Williams:** AC 13, HD: 1, AB: +1, Damage: 1d2 unarmed. Saves: 15, Movement: 10, ML: 7 Skills: Lead +1, Work/Mining+1, Talk +1

**Kidnapping Team:** This group of mercenaries is working for an unnamed patron. GMs are invited to select a different mining Magnate, or another organization to serve as patrons. This group could be independent, and is simply looking to make a quick, albeit dirty and brutal, dollar. There are ten mercenaries, all of them equipped to TL4 standards. The GM should also give some of the team members access to dirty tricks: psionics, pretech devices, or heavy weaponry. They are going up against PCs, after all.

**Average Merc:** AC: 17, HD: 5, AB: +5, Damage: 2d6+2\* Mag SMG. Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 10, Skills: Sneak +2, Notice +1, Tactics +1

**COMPLICATIONS:** A sensitive operation such as this invites any number of horrible complications.

1. **They're Ideological:** The Magnates are not bloody tyrants, but they are capitalist oligarchs. The kidnapping team is positively desperate and ruthless because they are not mercenaries. They are hoping to kidnap Marten Williams to make political demands on the Lida Magnate. The PCs might find that they are sympathetic to their demands.
2. **Big Damn Hero:** One of the security guards at the Lida mine goes above and beyond, and fights desperately to prevent the PCs from snatching Marten Williams.
3. **The Kidnappers are Prepared:** Someone was sloppy on operational security, and the kidnappers are already waiting for the PCs and Marten at the warehouse. A bloodbath might ensue.
4. **It's a Set-Up:** The PCs are being targeted by the Magnates of Byalstok because they're independent off-worlders (or something). The entire operation is a set-up designed to get the PCs killed, or worse, captured and tossed into a mine. The kidnapping was too easy, and the team is met at the warehouse by overwhelming Magnate forces.
5. **Breakdown:** The PCs' ride, a ubiquitous grav-car, breaks down en route to the warehouse. Now the PCs have to get to ground and evade the Lida police, as well as the kidnapping team, all the while safeguarding Marten Williams.
6. **This Is Only a Test:** The PCs are hired to test the security infrastructure of the Lida Magnate. They must perform the kidnapping without alerting the guards, or leaving any indication that they snatched Marten Williams.

### ENKE (LTC2 15)

Enke is a shimmering, freezing, water world with floating, ocean-going cities governed by militaristic nobility. Adventures on Enke can run the gamut between negotiating with aggressive natives, to treasure hunting, to fighting natives while treasure hunting, and dealing with the scourge of slavery.

**9. THE RED QUEEN AND THE CITY TRAPPED IN ICE:** If the PCs want to get anywhere with the xenophobic locals, they'll have to earn their trust. That means waiting until an off-world slaving ship arrives to harvest new victims. Be warned that fighting slavery on Enke means fighting the Gure Gauza, and possibly the KTL.

**Outline:** The PCs have arrived at the landlocked city of Ankara, lifted out of the sea and half-encased in glacial ice. Though the Ankarans are less xenophobic than most Enkans, they are unwilling to trade or otherwise deal with offworlders until the PCs prove their trustworthiness. Why are they so xenophobic? Like most Enkans, the Ankarans have been suffering under repeated raids by interstellar slavers.

**Player Briefing:** There is much for the party to gain by getting into the good graces of the Ankarans. This city is beautiful, famed for its deep core glacial ice sculptures, ice architecture, and the bountiful harvests of exotics from the sea. Perhaps the PCs have heard that Ankara is the place to acquire aquatic-based pharmaceuticals, which would fetch a very good price in more advanced markets (see Enke's trade table on LTC2 15). Or perhaps the PCs are looking for the lost city of Kayzar (see below) and would like to look around for survivors of that tragedy. Whatever the reason, the markets and bars of Ankara will remain closed to the party until they prove their trustworthiness.

Too many Ankarans have been taken by offworlders and sold as slaves in the Asoka Sklabo market on Meza Virs (LTC1 47). It should become clear to the PCs that this city has suffered greatly at the hands of Gure Gauza slavers (LTC1 19). If the PCs don't ask, the mayor of Ankara, Kurt Leist, will happily suggest that the PCs can use their ship to deter the slavers from attacking Ankara. The slavers are likely to arrive soon. The *Red Queen* (LTC2 19) does not need to be destroyed, simply driven off. Accomplish this, he says, and he will give the PCs his blessing to conduct business in his city.

**GM Details:** The task at hand is not simple. The *Red Queen* will arrive in a week's time, but it is not the only slave ship to visit Enke. The *Eris* (LTC2 19) will arrive a day prior to the *Red Queen*, scout around, and then stay in close proximity to her sister ship in case of trouble. The PCs can find out about the smaller *Eris*, if they do some investigating. There are other ships that operate in the Enke system, and they may have detected more than one slave vessel arriving. Or, perhaps a sympathetic and optimistic Ankanan might actually believe the PCs are true to their word, and will give them as much information as they need to prepare for what is to come.

The *Eris* will arrive, scout the system for a day, and then head to Enke and assume a low orbit. The Red Queen will then make for Enke, and land in the center of Ankara. The residents know the drill: the slavers will make their rounds, take a dozen or two citizens in tribute, and then leave. The crew of the Red Queen does not anticipate any trouble from Ankarans, but they will be on their guard. After loading their human cargo into the hold, the Red Queen will head for another collection site closer to the equator.

The PCs' plan should succeed or fail on its own merits, whatever those might happen to be. Use opposed Computer rolls for the NPC crews vs. the PC comms operator to hide their presence. If they manage to ambush both the *Red Queen* and the *Eris*, the PCs will have a round or two of freedom to act as they so choose. After which, the *Eris* will quickly join the combat to run interference, while the *Red Queen* attempts to leave with all haste. Success will mean having a permanent friendly port of call on Enke, a rare thing among interstellar freebooters. The PCs might even manage to cripple, or even more spectacularly, capture a Gure Gauza slaving ship. Failure could mean having to repair their own ship at their own expense, or endure the loss of their ship, or worse, the PCs might themselves end up captured and sold in the Asoka Sklabo market!

### **NPCs:**

**Kurt Leist:** The reluctant mayor of Ankara and a perpetual optimist (43M). There aren't many political figures left in the Ice City. Once it became clear that there was no way to dislodge the landlocked floating city from the glacier, most of the political elite of Ankara left. Kurt was one of the younger city officials who chose to stay. "No good deed goes unpunished," as Mayor Leist is fond of saying, and Ankarans have chosen him to lead them until the bitter end. Kurt is an unassuming middle-aged man with a paunch belly, balding head, and a sharp tongue. He still holds out hope beyond hope that somehow there is a way of saving his city. In the meantime, he runs things as best he can.

**Buru Ilya Chinedu:** Gure Gauza boss of the Enke slave trading ring (56F). A cold and calculating far trader, *Buru Chinedu* is a very powerful person in the Gure Gauza of the Lurian Trailing Cluster. She commands the *Red Queen*, and aboard her ship, her word is law. She demands, and obtains, perfect loyalty from her lieutenants and crew through a cunning combination of fear and a hefty cut of the profits of her illicit trade.

**Ilya Chinedu:** AC 16, HD: 8, AB: +6, Damage: 2d6\* Thermal SMG. Saves: 10, Movement: 10, ML: 11  
Skills: Sneak +2, Notice +2, Lead +4, Tactics +2, Trade +2 (Expert Re-roll ability)



**Laguntz Moro Prizan:** The captain of the *Eris* (67M). A dirty, despicable pirate captain who answers to no one other than *Buru Chinedu*. Captain Prizan commands the *Eris*, and his small crew are considered some of the best starfarers in the LTC. Prizan was instrumental in acquiring the *Eris*, and he enjoys the spoils of his labors: slaves, concubines and all the finest hedonisms of port. But when he returns to the bridge of the *Eris*, Captain Prizan transforms back into the apex predator of pirates that he is.

**Moro Prizan:** AC 18, HD: 9, AB: +9, Damage: 2d8+2\* Mag Rifle (with burst option), Monoblade, Grenades. Saves: 9, Movement: 10, ML: 12, Skills: Sneak +3, Notice +3, Tactics +3, Lead +3. (Warrior ability: auto dodge once per combat)

**The Crew of the Red Queen:** There are forty able bodied crewmen on the Red Queen. Each of them

are sadistic slavers who care only about the credits their cargo will gain them back on Meza Virs. They are tactically coherent, well-trained, and armed to the teeth.

**Crew of the Red Queen:** AC 16, HD: 5, AB: +4, Damage: 2d6 Thermal Pistol. Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 11 Skills: Notice +2, Exert, +2, Fix +3

**The Crew of the Eris:** This small group of 7 raiders comprise the military elite of the Gure Gauza slaving operation on Enke. Each one of these men and women are hardened killers, outfitted with a mix of pretech and postech weapons and equipment. They are fearsome opponents, in and out of their starship, and the GM can justify just about any piece of powerful gear in their possession.

**Murder Commandos:** AC 19, HD: 7, AB: +8, Damage: 2d6+2\* Mag SMG. Saves: 11, Movement: 10, ML: 12, Skills: Exert +3, Sneak +2, Tactics +3, Notice +2(Warrior ability: auto dodge once per combat)

**COMPLICATIONS:** The GM is advised to avoid leaving the party completely twisting in the wind. Still, here are some twists to make the party's expected lifespan a little shorter.

1. **The Gure Gauza slavers have a spy in Ankara**, who they have long since blackmailed into working for them. His name is Kurt Leist, and he is the mayor of the city. The PCs are walking into a deadly ambush.
2. The Gure Gauza have brought along a small **single-seat spike-fighter** armed with a reaper battery. Now things are going to get very interesting.
3. The **Enkans from another floating city** (Iridia, for example) have sent a diplomatic delegation to attempt to negotiate some sort of deal with the slavers. They will reveal the presence of the PCs and their ship, given the chance.
4. The PCs have done enough investigating around Ankara that they might be able to **dislodge the city from the ice**, using a few fusion reactors and thrusters. This might make the *capture* of the *Red Queen* imperative.
5. The crew of **the Eris has a high-powered combat psychic**. Use the same stats as above, only reduce HD to 5, but grant the NPC access to all Biopsionic powers up to and including level 7 (mastered levels 1-6), Telekinetic powers level 1-3 (no mastery) and Teleportation levels 1-4 (no mastery).
6. **As #5, but replace Teleportation with Precognition**. The combat psychic will be able to detect the PCs' ambush.

**10. THE LOST CITY OF KAYZAR:** There are reasons for ingratiating oneself with the locals. Anyone who stays on Enke long enough will learn about the floating city of Kayzar, which struck an iceberg, or a reef, or had a critical failure... Well, at any rate, the city sunk to the bottom of the ocean. The survivors migrated to other floating cities or even to some of the insular fishing villages on the islands. Tracking down one of these survivors will be tough. Getting a solid lead, even tougher. But finding the Lost City of Kayzar? Priceless!

**Outline:** Finding Kayzar (*LTC2 19*) would be a major archaeological achievement, but most players would be more interested in the relics and salvage that might still be found within the sunken city. The floating city sank within living memory, and this means that there are likely many hundreds of survivors who have first hand accounts of where Kayzar was last found before it disappeared into Enke's icy ocean. The PCs have a big job ahead of them, and it can be divided into a few steps:

1. Locate someone who survived the sinking of Kayzar. Use their knowledge to somehow determine the last known location of the floating city.
2. Acquire the means to descend to the ocean floor, and look for the ruins.
3. Explore the ruins once found, and get out alive—preferably laden down with salvage.

**Player Briefing:** The nature of human myth-making is such that even though the sinking of Kayzar occurred only sixty years ago, the event has already passed into legend. Dropping clues about the existence of the Lost City of Kayzar can be as simple as having the locals mention it in passing when the PCs visit a watering hole: "oh, you offworlders must be looking for Kayzar." Or, perhaps a PC's relatives were refugees from Kayzar, and a precious family heirloom now rests at the bottom of the cold Enkan ocean.

**GM Details:** The search for former refugees from Kayzar should not take too much time, but will require resources to bribe, cajole and otherwise convince the xenophobic Enkans to cooperate. Perhaps the PCs could perform a task, like driving off slavers to get into the good graces of the locals. Whatever the means used, the NPC section below has a few Kayzar refugee options to choose from.

Once a survivor divulges the general location of the sinking of Kayzar, the PCs can spring into phase two of the plan: acquiring the means to descend into the ocean, and poke around for ruins. The Enkans are accomplished seagoers, and could supply the PCs with a TL3 submersible, but it is on Byalstok that the best submersibles are produced in the LTC. Travelling to Byalstok, and acquiring a submersible like the one detailed in adventure #10 can be as simple as purchasing one, or could consist of a series of adventures. Then the trip back to Enke, with a large submersible stowed in the ship's cargo hold, could be the source of more adventures. Whatever the case, getting the submersible should not be simple.

Exploring the ocean floor under the northern glacier where Kayzar now rests should be an adventure (or two) in and of itself. The PCs can use all the tools at their disposal to help speed things along: successful History, Navigation, Vehicle/Sea, and Science skill rolls will certainly help. However, the entire process should not rest on a handful of dice rolls. Instead, have the PCs rely on their investigations from the first phase, where they were tracking down leads to survivors. Perhaps certain environmental clues, like debris, strange signals, or ghostly flickering lights, can help guide the PCs towards their goal.

Finally, after all their hard work, the PCs should discover the Lost City of Kayzar, half-collapsed on the ocean floor in total darkness. Above it, a glacier shelf looms oppressively. Part of the city has been crushed, ground up where the glacier hits the continental shelf. However, much of the city has survived. It will not take long for the PCs to discover working airlocks to enter parts of the city. The adventure then becomes a subaquatic dungeon crawl. Hazards can include all sorts of structural problems associated with the crushing depth. But there were many who did not escape when Kayzar sank, and who knows what horrible society now exists in what remains of the once beautiful floating city. GMs looking for inspiration might find the first BioShock video game particularly helpful.

Why did Kayzar sink? Any number of reasons could work. Perhaps a freak accident in a nuclear power plant (TL3 fission) forced the evacuation of most of the inhabitants. Those who remain are horribly mutated and sick, and much of the city is now a glowing radioactive zone. Or, perhaps another rival floating city sabotaged Kayzar's navigational systems, and caused it to plough into the glacier that now floats over it. Perhaps the residents were experimenting with spike-drive technology, and a catastrophic accident caused Kayzar to sink like a stone. Or perhaps a coup d'état replaced the military leaders of Kayzar with a doomsday cult that proceeded to destroy the city and its sick society. Any of these options will color whoever and whatever the players find as they explore Kayzar.

The entire expedition should certainly be worth the players' invested time. Since the evacuation happened so quickly, residents were unable to leave with much of their valuables. Sunken treasures abound in Kayzar, and the PCs should be able to make a very lucrative profit from this expedition. As well, all sorts of pretech devices might be hidden away in the once wealthy floating city, since the technology that kept the city afloat is sufficiently advanced.



### NPCs:

**Adelbert Weiz:** a very old, rather senile, Kayzar refugee (93M). Mr. Weiz was around 30 (he's no longer sure) when the city of Kayzar sank, and he was shoved onto a liferaft. At sea for days, he and his fellows eventually made it to a fishing village and slowly got back on their feet. Weiz eventually re-married (his wife perished at Kayzar) and has a large family now. Weiz can remember his younger days, but he is growing very old and senile. Jogging his memory will require some thought. Perhaps putting him back in a boat would help. Either way, if the players come up with a clever idea, the GM should reward them with a sudden flash of memory. Weiz can give a reliable last known location of Kayzar before it sank.

**Lisse Ganez:** An aging refugee from Kayzar (69F). An accomplished aquaculture engineer, Lisse Ganez is old enough to retire, but is still very sharp. She has serious misgivings about the PCs, and will insist that if they want the last known location of the floating city, they'll have to bring her along on the expedition. Ganez wants Kayzar to stay lost; too many of her friends and family perished on that fateful day, and she does not want scavengers picking over their remains. When the time is right, she will sabotage the expedition and force the PCs to turn back.

**Alexander Holz:** A fisherman (64M). A young child refugee during the evacuation, Holz does not have many memories of Kayzar. However, he does know that the city was very far north, near the glaciers. More importantly, Holz has a pretech trinket given to him by his mother that will help the PCs find the city. It is a simple remote homing compass that will activate when the PCs are within 100km of the lost city. They will be able to navigate to Kayzar's resting place on the ocean floor using it. Holz wants to join the expedition, and will insist on payment from the salvage, or possibly a family heirloom.

**"Maloo":** A *somewhat* deranged resident of Kayzar (54?M). Skinny, malnourished and dressed in rags and salvage, "Maloo" is a native of Kayzar, born after the city sank. He has lived his entire life alone in the depths of the city, scavenging, hunting, and eking out a very pitiful existence. Maloo is friendly enough, especially if he is given food. He can serve as a source of information for the PCs, though much of what he says is quite nonsensical.

**Ko Lo-Shua:** A dangerously insane resident of Kayzar (44F). This hermit is a cannibalistic monster who inhabits her own well-protected corner of the sunken city. Her abode is ringed with spike traps laced with toxic chemicals, falling debris, and improvised grenades; Lo-Shua does not want to entertain visitors, unless she wants you for dinner. She will play psychological games with anyone in her "hunting ground", using fear and psychological intimidation to move them into her preferred killing zone.

**Cannibalistic Hermit:** AC 15, HD: 5, AB: +8, Damage: 1d8+2 jagged blade, 1d3 bite. Saves: 14, Movement: 10, ML: 12, Skills: Sneak +3, Notice +2, Exert +2, Talk +2

**Nadia Khorzhai:** The leader of the denizens of Kayzar (80F). One of the few current residents of Kayzar who survived the sinking and is still alive today. Nadia is the community elder and leader. She does her best to keep everyone alive and reduce tensions. However, every year more and more perish due to malnutrition, disease, violence, or accidents. Nadia also knows that it will be creeping insanity that will finally end the survivors of Kayzar. She is angry, but resigned to her fate. While she is not pleased that the PCs have come, she is interested to hear about the surface world, and wonders if it not a sign that things might change for the better.

**Denizens of Kayzar:** Roughly three hundred souls make their home in the underwater ruins of the once glorious floating city of Kayzar. All are the unfortunate descendants of those who could not, or would not, leave the city in its death throes. Most are malnourished, and spend most of their time near the few advanced greenhouses and food processors that still function after decades. The denizens of Kayzar are not happy to host visitors, especially since they will (accurately) surmise that the PCs are here to gain loot and cover themselves in glory. However, the denizens of Kayzar are not combatants, and will disperse into the nooks and crannies of the ruins the moment the PCs brandish their weapons.

**Emmanuel Naxos** (this write-up first appeared in *LTC2 49*): No treasure hunting adventure is complete without the presence of a rival possessing even fewer morals than the typical group of PCs. Naxos is such a villain. He is not interested in the historical or scholastic value of any archaeological finds. He does not care about how the ancients lived, or how they made art, and why it was meaningful to them. He serves only his inexhaustible greedy impulses.

Naxos is a fairly recent arrival on the archaeological/tomb-robbing scene in the Lurian Trailing Cluster, Emmanuel Naxos has his own ship, the *Ruby* (*LTC2 50*) his own crew, and his own agenda. Generally, Naxos is mainly concerned with the value his finds will have on the relic market. Naxos can serve as a source of information, or even nav charts (if properly paid), but he is more useful as a means to harry the players. Naxos is well-equipped, has a well-handled public image, and is highly regarded by many KTL Board members. If the GM wishes to complicate the lives of the players during their expedition down to Kayzar, having Naxos operating as a rival, with a small army of hired goons to back him up, would not be inappropriate.

<b>Emmanuel Naxos</b> (Level 6 Expert)			
Armor Class	17	No. Appearing	1 + a retinue of goons
Hit Dice	6 (30HP)	Saving Throw	11
Attack Bonus	+5	Movement	10
Damage	Thermal Pistol: 2d6*	Morale	9
Special	Pistol is burst capable	Skill Bonus	+3

**COMPLICATIONS:** A number of complications were alluded to above, and are presented in greater detail below.

1. **The PCs encounter a hungry predator:** the Enkan Ice Shark is a particularly vicious and cunning predator. It does not really resemble a shark, but the creature’s place at the top of the food chain made naming it easy enough. The creature will attack while the PCs are searching for Kayzar, but will be driven off by any stiff resistance. The Ice Shark is patient, and will wait until the PCs leave the city to make another attack.

Enkan Ice Shark			
Armor Class	15	No. Appearing	1
Hit Dice	8	Saving Throw	11
Attack Bonus	+8	Movement	15 underwater
Damage	Bite: 2d10	Morale	9
Special	Ram Attack: targets must make a Physical Save or be stunned for 1d6 rounds.	Skill Bonus	+3 Stealth



2. **A submersible from another floating city:** Another floating city has taken notice of the offworlders and their obsession with Kayzar. They send an armed sub to interfere with the PCs’ efforts, and are willing to put a boarding party in Kayzar to stop the PCs’ scavenging.

3. **Emmanuel Naxos, Treasure Hunter:** Naturally a rival treasure hunter will be watching the PCs’ progress, and arrive in Kayzar just after the PCs to make a giant mess of things, and steal valuables. Naxos travels with a small, highly trained and competent entourage.

4. **Slaver attack:** During any part of the PCs’ preparations for the expedition, they are either caught up in a slaver attack, or witness one directly.

5. **The submersible is damaged:** The PCs will have to salvage something while underwater to escape the city.

6. **Freak flooding in Kayzar:** PCs will have to get out of the section of the city they’re in, or drown.

## **KADMON (LTC3 11)**

Adventures on Kadmon will probably involve the very tense three-way cold war and arms race between the Pact of Steel, United Workers Republic, and the Progressive Empire. Spies, covert operations, arms deals—these are all the basic building blocks of adventures on Kadmon. Enterprising GMs might have the players getting involved with one of the smaller powers on the planet, and helping them maintain their own agenda without upsetting their larger allies and enemies. Meanwhile, the adventure outline presented below ratchets up the tension and paranoia of cold war nuclear standoffs.

**11. HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING:** Kadmon’s three-way cold war has created a byzantine web of backroom politicking, paranoia, and double-crosses. The fact that each of the superpowers is armed to the teeth and itching for a fight is bad enough; it’s made even worse because the KTL has clandestinely supplied the Pact of Steel with nuclear weapons technology in exchange for exclusive trading rights once the fallout from the next war has settled. This has turned a tense situation into something downright harrowing. But that’s not all! The KTL has secretly sabotaged a Pact of Steel early warning radar station. The crisis that breaks is just what the KTL needs to step in and assume control of the situation—in a strictly advisory capacity, of course—in the hopes of avoiding a terribly destructive war. However, the PCs have gotten wind of the KTL’s sinister dealings, and must intervene before Kadmon’s three superpowers launch a deadly global war.

**Outline:** The KTL’s goal is to play a terrifying double game of nuclear brinkmanship, in order to stage a nearly-bloodless coup, and assume control of the Pact of Steel. They will then offer the Progressive Empire and United Workers Republic similar military, economic and administrative consulting services—without letting on that all the consultants are actually KTL operatives. To achieve this outcome, the KTL factor on Kadmon has decided to play a high-stakes game using a manufactured nuclear warfare crisis as the catalyst.

The KTL has clandestinely supplied the Pact of Steel with a small number of nuclear warheads, as well as the high-tech TL3 bombers to deliver them to their targets. Although the KTL is behind the weapons transfer, the Pact of Steel is not aware of this; the Pact military believes that it has acquired these weapons via “independent interstellar traders.”

Meanwhile, the KTL has helped the Pact of Steel upgrade its air defense network. What the Pact of Steel does not know is that the KTL has installed a backdoor hack in the air defense system, allowing it to be shut down in an apparent act of sabotage. These upgrades have not gone unnoticed, and both the Progressive Empire and United Workers Republic have been desperately upgrading their air defenses, as well as their bomber fleets. Naturally, the KTL has been supplying much of the expertise and materiel for the arms race on all sides.

Only the Pact of Steel has been supplied with nuclear weapons, but all sides have been equipped with small numbers of stealth bombers. These bombers are otherwise armed with locally-developed nerve gas bombs.

The three-way cold war on Kadmon is highly unstable, and there are always small border incidents between all the major and minor powers. The plan is for the KTL to shut down the air defense network around Jameston, the Pact of Steel's capital, during a period of unusually high tension. With their main city vulnerable, the Pact of Steel's air force will be on high alert. This will ramp up tensions with the United Workers Republic and Progressive Empire, who will also have strategic bombers in the air.

Rather than engage in war profiteering during a bloody and highly destructive global war, the KTL has better idea: one of their best teams of operatives will be piloting a United Workers Republic bomber. It will drop its payload of deadly nerve agent on Jameston. This will provoke a nuclear response from the Pact of Steel, who will order a nuclear strike on two UWR cities. Thus begins the escalation to global armageddon. It will be at this point that the KTL will arrive just in the nick of time to deploy enough nuke snuffer systems to cover all the major urban centers on Kadmon. They will be hailed as peacemakers, and high-placed friends of the KTL in the Pact of Steel government will invite the interstellar merchants in to help run things after the old heads of state are deposed. Eventually, both the Progressive Empire and the United Workers Republic will hire their own off-world advisors—all KTL operatives, naturally—and that will allow the KTL to control the Lurian Trailing Cluster's most populous and wealthy world.

**Player Briefing:** The players can get caught up in the KTL's plans for Kadmon in a myriad of ways. Perhaps they are hired by desperate members of intelligence groups operating on Kadmon, or they stumble onto the plot and are drawn into the KTL's web. Perhaps they are the "independent traders" who supply the Pact of Steel with nuclear warheads, unknowingly working for the KTL. Naturally, the KTL factor does not want any loose ends; the player characters learn about the plot because they narrowly survive an assassination attempt, and begin climbing up the food chain until someone tells them what is going on.

On Kadmon, the Pact of Steel is eager to benefit from the KTL's technological know-how, but a number of senior members of the Pact's government are wary of the KTL's intentions. The Camrosan Hierarchate Intelligence service (*LTC1 23*) has gotten wind of the KTL's activities. Unfortunately, sleeper agents spread across the planet are not in an ideal position to foil plans for global domination, so the Camrosans have turned to the PCs for help to prevent the catastrophe of global war on Kadmon, as well as the KTL's plans for subverting power.

The briefing, if the Camrosans are involved, is to the point: the tensions on Kadmon are reaching a boiling point. The KTL has a great deal of influence on the Pact of Steel's senior military and political echelon. The brewing crisis needs an event to act as a catalyst. When it occurs, the party will know it. Whatever happens, the player characters must prevent any use of chemical weapons, or worse, on Kadmon.

**GM Details:** This adventure is designed to force players to act quickly on only the tiniest amount of information. The stakes are so high that even a wrong decision will usually be preferable to inaction. Adventurous GMs might consider ramping up the mutually assured destruction undertone, and have a real time countdown clock (an egg timer will work where a digital display is not feasible) to keep the action moving quickly.

The player briefing above is sparse, and how much information the players have at their disposal will depend entirely on how they are tangled up in this horrible situation. Having a professional intelligence briefing will make the course of action somewhat clearer. Simply stumbling onto the KTL plot will mean that the players might never actually be sure what they really achieved.

If the PCs have a starship, they are especially well-equipped to help. A starship, even a very ramshackle one, is equipped to basic TL4 standards, and will have sensors and quantum computing power sufficient enough to track the Pact of Steel bombers carrying nukes. More importantly, the party's starship will have a spike drive, which will act as a nuke snuffer to prevent any detonation over UWR cities. Finally, depending on how much information the players squeeze out of their briefing, contacts, or any interrogations they may conduct, they might have enough to piece together that the KTL is running a false flag operation: the UWR bomber that is headed for Jameston with a payload of nerve agent is being piloted by KTL plants. If the bomber drops its nerve gas payload on Jameston, then the Pact of Steel will launch a retaliatory nuclear attack on the UWR and Progressive Empire. The PCs can prevent a successful nuclear strike by taking out the bombers, but will have to deal with the KTL's wrath in the aftermath.

The KTL will be on the lookout for any off-world rivals to spoil the plan. Anyone affiliated with a starship will be carefully watched, and KTL goons will be instructed to play for keeps: like any cold war thriller, this adventure should leave a trail of bodies in blind alleys before the bombers start flying.

Below are two native Kadmon vehicles the PCs might come up against: a high altitude strategic bomber (think B-47 Stratojet bomber), and a supersonic interceptor (like an F-106 Delta Dart). Both are not major threats to a TL4 starship, but are included nonetheless.

<b>Strategic Bomber (TL3)</b>			
Speed	3	Km/h Travel	1000
Armor	8	Power	4/0 free
Hit Points	30	Mass	16/0 free
Crew	3	Hardpoints	2/0 free
Base Frame	Atmoflyer (TL3)		
Fittings	Sealed Atmosphere Cargo Space/Bomb Bay (14000kg, roughly enough for one or two large thermonuclear wepaons Heavy Machine Gun: 3d6#		

This large, four-engined jet powered bomber is a lumbering, ungainly agent of mass destruction. It carries two thermonuclear bombs in its belly, and has a remotely controlled rear-facing turret for some modicum of self-defense.

<b>Supersonic Interceptor (TL3)</b>			
Speed	6	Km/h Travel	2000
Armor	4	Power	6/0 free
Hit Points	15	Mass	16/0 free
Crew	1	Hardpoints	3/0 free
Base Frame	Atmoflyer (TL3)		
Fittings	Sealed Atmosphere, Afterburners Smart Missile Launcher: 4 missiles Hardpoint support (1) Power System: Medium, Milspec Engine Boost x 2		

As far as TL3 vehicles go, this delta-winged single-engined jet fighter is a pilot's dream: it is fast, maneuverable and dangerous. This jet is designed to meet and destroy high-flying strategic bombers, like the one listed above.

### **NPCs:**

This high stakes game of nuclear brinkmanship and duplicity is the result of the KTL Factor. The other NPCs listed here are optional characters to help flesh out the scenario however the GM might want.

**Eduwa Ukim:** KTL Factor for Kadmon system (49M). Ukim is an important member of the Consolidator faction of the Karta Trading League (LTC1 17). He is ambitious, ruthless and knows that his plan to usurp power on Kadmon could result in the deaths of millions. He considers the reconstruction contracts that will come out of any nuclear or chemical exchange to be worth the deaths. Ukim is a businessman's businessman, resplendant in the finest clothing, and willing to negotiate for anything. The players will be dealing with a consummate liar and manipulator. Should they wish to confront him, he will deny any involvement with this affair, and will also provide the PCs with false information. Then he will send out a very skilled assassination team.

**Alphonz Trang:** Pact of Steel government agent (51M). A veteran espionage agent, Trang will be very interested in whatever activities the PCs get up to. However, he is equally as distrustful of Ukim's "gifts" of the new air defense network, and nuclear bombers. Trang is currently serving as a diplomatic attaché in Ambassador Penelope James' staff (see below).

**Melquana Inbar:** Camrosan Hierarchate Intelligence deep cover agent (67F). Inbar is not primarily a spy. Her task is to provide long-term socio-cultural analyses of Kadmon's population, to best serve the Camrosan Hierarchate. She has been on Kadmon for a long, long time, and has grown attached to the place. She is protecting her assignment, but also her world, from nuclear war, and KTL takeover. Inbar works in the Pact of Steel defense ministry. She has contacts worldwide, but cannot risk calling on her resources lest her mission become compromised.

**Penelope James:** United Workers Republic Ambassador to the Pact of Steel (58F). James was a hero of the workers revolution that established the UWR not too long ago. Her posting to Jameston in the Pact of Steel is prestigious, but she wonders if it was done to sideline her out of further political advancement back home. Regardless, she works to advance the interests of the UWR in the Pact of Steel, and does her best to maintain open, if not friendly, diplomatic channels between the two superpowers. She is open to working with outsiders to stop a terrible war, but is vulnerable: much of her staff has been infiltrated by Pact of Steel intelligence agents (like Alphonz Trang).



**COMPLICATIONS:** This scenario is complicated enough, but a few extra problems are listed below:

1. The “rogue” UWR bomber piloted by KTL agents has a quantum ECM generator—it will be extremely difficult to track and shoot down.
2. The KTL has already been working with the UWR and Progressive Empire: **everyone has nukes!**
3. **The PCs are the “independent interstellar traders”** who inadvertently delivered a large supply of nuclear warheads to the Pact of Steel. Factor Ukim does not like loose ends, and a kill team has been dispatched to deal with the PCs.
4. The KTL dispatches a pair of spike-drive capable fighters to stop the PCs from interfering with the plan.
5. The KTL has managed to subvert enough of the Pact of Steel’s senior political echelon that they attempt to launch a **coup against the government.**
6. **The unthinkable happens:** a nuke or a nerve gas bomb devastates a city. What do the PCs do now?

### LEPRA (LTC3 XX)

Adventures in the Lepra system can involve the mining operations on the horrible moon Zehir, and the station that sits above it, linked to the mines by an ambitious space elevator. The hell-hole that is Zehir is the site of the Lurian Republic's main source of rare and exotic compounds required for new spike drives. In addition to adventures about surviving the harsh environment of the moon, as well as the system itself, there are opportunities for espionage adventures, and interactions with all sorts of criminal enterprises.

**12. THE 32ND CENTURY OLYMPICS:** The joint KTL-Merchant House operation on Zehir Station and down in the mines is a raucous one. The work is so dangerous that many who arrive perish in the mines, and those that do not are considered some of the most hardy souls in the LTC. And these people like to work hard and play hard. The PCs are contacted by a contact in the Lurian Republic Navy. The job is to run security during the "Lepra Olympics", a competition between teams of miners. However, dark purposes are at work in the tunnels of Zehir, and their job is just a cover.

**Outline:** The PCs are hired by Mikal Nordia of Lurian Naval Intelligence (LTC1 25) to track down a terrorist cell that is sabotaging mines and causing all sorts of damage. The cell is not easy to find, but the PCs also have to manage security during the "Lepra Olympics" which is a giant headache. Once they face off against the terrorists, it turns out that there's a bigger conspiracy going on, involving the Pact of Koios.

**Player Briefing:** If the PCs have worked for Mikal Nordia before, then chances are both the PCs and their patron will have amassed a small number of favors to call in on each other. This is one of those instances where Nordia needs the PCs to do a job and will call in a favor, *and* pay them to do it—it's that bad.

The PCs will be working as "Security Consultants" for the Zehir Station security chief during the "Lepra Olympics", a week-long event pitting the miners against each other in various team and individual sports, all in good fun. Really, the Olympics are an excuse for workers in some of the most dangerous conditions in the Lurian Trailing Cluster to blow off steam. The bars will be packed, the back alleys will be packed, the brothels will be filled to capacity.

The goal will be, in addition to helping maintain some semblance of semi-order, for the PCs to locate a terrorist cell that has been attacking mining sites over the past six months. No lives have been lost in the attacks, but they have escalated in severity. Nordia and others in the Lurian Republic are concerned that the Olympics are a sufficiently tempting target for a mass casualty terror attack. The PCs are to intercept the terrorists and prevent them from carrying out such an atrocity.

**GM Details:** This adventure is a good opportunity to showcase Zehir Station, the work hard, play harder, culture of the miners, and the absolutely perilous conditions under which they toil. It is also a great excuse to set up science fiction mining version of Lumberjack Games for the PCs to watch over or even participate in. Drunken debauchery, roughhousing and foolhardiness are the order of the day as the miners will do their best to confound and frustrate security personnel, play pranks, and generally behave in the time honored fashion of first class nuisances.

The terrorist cell is comprised of two individuals, Thomas Krozenko and Grigor Jameson (detailed below) who have been attacking mining sites, seemingly at random, over the past few months. They are indeed planning an attack during the Olympics, but not for the reasons Nordia believes. The pair are independent contractors working for an unknown party. They have been tasked with finding and destroying a Pact of Koios (*LTC1 24*) operation in the Zehir mine tunnels. Thus far, they have not been successful, but they have finally found the Pact's base, and will move quickly.

The Pact of Koios is on Zehir because its leader, Dr. Sanjay Elstead, believes that the moon's atmosphere is home to a rare extremophile microbe that is especially suited to genetic manipulation. Specifically, Elstead plans on extracting a sample of the microbe from the moon's toxic, soupy atmosphere, in order to refine and modify the sample into a workable maltech doomsday device. Once ready, Elstead will release the microbe on Lur, and fulfill the Pact's goal of protecting the Camrosan Hierarchate (*LTC1 23*) from the threat of Lur's dynamic and individualistic culture.

The PCs should get an inkling of Krozenko and Jameson's actual mission if they spend any time surveilling them or manage to interrogate them. As well, the Pact will have operatives on the lookout for Krozenko and Jameson, and anyone they come into contact with will be marked for assassination. Dr. Elstead's plan is to use her specially equipped vacc suit to venture out into Zehir's atmosphere with specially shielded equipment, harvest the microbe, and then leave the Lepra system.

### **NPCs:**

**Thomas Krozenko:** Independent mercenary operative (27M). Krozenko is a solid face-man with an easy, affable manner. He is charming, friendly, and entirely two-faced. He's usually happy to work alone, but is just as comfortable working in small groups for short durations. He and Jamison have gotten along well enough. Krozenko has been working his way across various mining sites on Zehir, causing equipment failures, breakdowns and injuries. Recently, he and Jamison have stepped up their operation to include the deaths of miners. To what end, even Krozenko doesn't know. He doesn't ask questions, so long as the money is coming in.

**Krozenko:** AC 14, HD: 3, AB: +4, Damage: Thermal Pistol: 2d6+1. Movement: 10, Saves: 14, ML: 9, Skills: Sneak +3, Talk +3, Exert +2 *Like a Charm* Expert reroll, once per encounter.

**Grigor Jameson:** Mercenary operative and criminal (24M). Jameson is a dark, brooding character of few words. He has been paired with Krozenko recently, and the two of them have been terrorizing the mining operations on Zehir. Jameson is a skilled demolitions expert, and he has a tendency to resort to explosives to solve his problems. This has not worked out well for him, and he is wanted on Basajaun for killing a dozen KTL security officers in Port Hardy.

**Jameson:** AC: 15, HD: 4, AB: +5 Damage: Thermal Pistol: 2d6, Grenades: 2d6. Movement: 10 Saves: 14, ML: 8, Skills: Sneak +2, Exert +3, Fix +3 (Demolitions). *Veteran's Luck* warrior special ability, once per combat.

**Dr. Sanjay Elstead:** Brilliant xenobiologist and villainous leader of the Pact of Koios (51F). Elstead is a strange little woman who is consumed by her work: the eventual destruction of the human populace of Lur. She is also an eccentric xenobiologist on the verge of a major breakthrough on Zehir, pertaining to the existence of extremophile microbacteria that are native to the planet's extremely hostile environment. This twin obsession with science and maltech-driven genocide makes Elstead a difficult conversationalist. She is detached and distant, but helpful if anyone requires technical or scientific assistance, and willing to do her a favour.

Elsted has multiple data sites across Zehir, which she monitors from a half dozen telemetry stations on the planet's surface. These are the sites that Krozenko and Jameson have been bombing these past few months.

**Dr. Elstead:** AC: 20, HD: 7, AB: +3, Damage: Shear Pistol: 2d8, Monoblade: 1d8+1, Movement: 10, Saves: 10, Skills: Know (Science) +4, Fix +4 (Maltech), Talk +3, Sneak +1. Note: Elstead should not engage in combat. She has a number of devoted followers to protect her. Her armor class reflects her Field Emitter Panoply (SWN 34) which she has integrated in her ubiquitous vacc suit. This will allow her to venture out into Zehir's corrosive atmosphere without endangering herself to collect her samples.

**Pact of Koios Soldiers:** AC: 6, HD: 3, AB: +3 Damage: Thermal Pistols: 2d6, Monoblades 1d8+1, Movement: 10, Saves: 12, ML: 12, Skills: Sneak +3, Notice +2, Exert +2.

**Lt. Commander Kyle Majors:** Security chief of Zehir Station (33M).Majors is a tall, good looking, and capable man with a solid track record of keeping the peace and public service. Before being assigned to Zehir Station, Majors was a security officer on board a Lurian scout frigate that made the first Lurian voyage to Basajaun. He is something of a legend, so it is surprising to anyone who knows about his exploits that he would end up in the bottom corner of the Lurian Trailing Cluster, keeping the peace on a rusted out mining station. Such is the nature of space-related politics in the Lurian Republic. Majors is well-respected among the miners and other civilians on Zehir and the station. He is less trusted by Greg Olafsen, who resents the intrepid explorer's presence and would love to have him discredited and transferred to some place even less hospitable than Lepra.

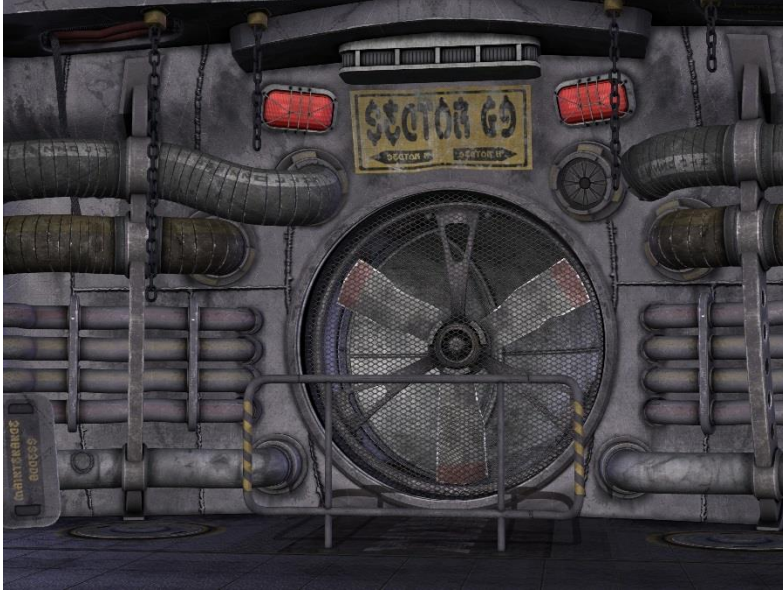
**Kyle Majors:** AC: 5, HD: 5, AB: +6, Damage: 2d6\* Void Carbine SMG. 1d8 Stun Pistol. Movement: 10, Saves: 13, ML: 10, Skills: Notice +2, Tactics +2, Lead +3. *Veteran's Luck* warrior special ability.

**Zehir Station Security:** AC: 6, HD: 1 AB: +1, Damage: 2d6 Void Carbine, 1d8 Stun Pistol. Movement: 10, Saves: 15, ML: 9, Skills: Notice +1, Talk +1

**Greg Olafson:** KTL administrator nominally in charge of Zehir Station per the KTL-Lurian agreement (42M). A short, middle-aged man, Olafsen is a career administrator that managed to worm his way into a decent position of power running Zehir Station in Lepra System. He is a degenerate coward who will never face an opponent head on. Instead, he maneuvers, manipulates, and operates from the shadows—and has developed a skill set that enables him to carry out his plots with great skill. Olafsen is not necessarily an evil, brutal man, but he is uncaring about the fate of the miners on Zehir: as long as the KTL turns a profit here, he is happy.

**Kuryen Tan:** Mine crew boss from Byalstok (31M). A short, wiry fellow who leads his crew with great gusto. The Byalstokans are born miners, and have been mining in dangerous locales for a very long time. With the KTL's contacts on Byalstok slowly bearing fruit, a few elite mining crews have made it off world. One such crew is led by Tan, and has been beating Preston's crew for the past quarter. Kuryen trusts and cares about his crew, and will give anyone real competition in the Lepra Olympics.

**Archie Preston:** Lurian mine crew boss (43M). A grumpy, gruff and surprisingly ruthless individual. Archie runs the most successful mining crew on Zehir, and expects to keep it that way. He will do anything to keep his crew ahead of the rest, thus guaranteeing bonuses and financial success. This will not include murder, but will include sabotage, intimidation and assault. Needless to say, Archie's crew has been winning the Olympics for a few years now, and he intends to keep it that way.



**COMPLICATIONS:** The underground tunnels of Zehir, as well as the station and the space elevator, are in constant need of repair due to the harsh environments they are in: the station and space elevator are in the shadow of the moon Zehir, which keeps Lepra's harsh radiation from killing everyone on board. Meanwhile, the mines are deep under the moon's surface, and life support systems are hard at work, preventing the toxic, corrosive atmosphere from infiltrating and killing everyone. What could go wrong?

1. **An atmospheric filter in the mines fails.** Dozens are trapped and will be killed without the PCs' rapid intervention. Exposure to the atmosphere will eat away a standard vacc suit in 3d6 minutes.
2. **A radiation buffer on the station fails:** The PCs will have to work quickly with other members of the Zehir Station crew to fix the problem from the outside, in space suits.
3. **The KTL withholds payment to some miners:** A dispute between the KTL and a mining team over a claim leads to non-payment and hard feelings all around. The miners are going around, riling people up. The PCs will have to intervene if a riot is to be avoided.
4. **Drunk and Disorderly Conduct:** The PCs have to help the Zehir security teams round up a large group of surly and drunk miners on the station. Everyone is spoiling for a fight.
5. **A Robbery!** One of the mining banks is robbed during the festivities. The PCs will have to help find the culprits while their main targets are still active.
6. **The PCs Are Miners:** A great way to start an adventure, the PCs are miners and other hardy folk in Lepra, looking to blow off steam and have some fun. They encounter Jameson and Krozenko while they are planting explosives, and interfere.

**13. WHAT DO YOU MEAN, THERE'S AN ASTEROID BASE?** There are rumours of a hidden pirate base in the distant asteroid field on the edge of the Lepra system. The PCs are hired to take a smuggler to a set of coordinates in the asteroid field. The EM interference from the star is so bad that no one is worried about the PCs being able to find their way back. It turns out, the pirates are holed up in a base that predates human colonization of the Lurian Trailing Cluster. It also turns out that the pirates did not fully explore their home...

**Outline:** It's a risky proposition to just go out into Lepra's harsh glare, looking for something that might not be there. However, the PCs are asked to take a smuggler on a joyride, and they could use the money and contacts that a job like this brings. Once they meet the pirates, they are permitted to visit their hideout.

**Player Briefing:** Avia Qin needs the a ship to move a cargo to some preset coordinates in the asteroid field of the Lepra system. The PCs have a reputation for getting things done despite the danger inherent in tromping around the Lepra system, and Qin is offering triple the going rate. She will also be accompanying the cargo, so this is not an obvious set up. Avia would like to get going immediately, before certain individuals on Zehir Station learn that she is leaving.

**GM Details:** Avia is moving supplies, as well as her own personal stash of valuables off of Zehir Station and into the care of her friends, the pirates and vagabonds that are holed up in the asteroids far off in the Lepra system. Should the PCs tarry or if the GM is feeling disposed towards chasing the PCs off the station, the Gure Gauza should be right on their heels until the PCs get their ship disengaged from the docking clamp. The journey must take less than 24 hours; any longer, and their ship's rad-buffers (built into the spike drive) will be overloaded and everyone inside will be exposed to a lethal dose of radiation. This means that if the PCs have a Spike-1 drive ship, they will be forced to "Trim the Course" to avoid certain death.

The pirates will meet the PCs in the asteroid field out at the outer rim of the system. The PCs will then be asked to slave their nav systems to the pirate vessel, which will lead them to the base, without the PCs learning the exact location themselves. This is possible to accomplish using some Navigation (12+ on a skill roll), though if the PCs do figure out where the base is, they had best keep that to themselves.

Once they have arrived at the asteroid base, the PCs will find a small, lived-in facility carved out of the rock and surprisingly hospitable. The pirates will be a little suspicious at first, but are confident that their location will remain hidden. They offer the PCs nearly-free run of their home, and as long as they behave themselves, there will be no problems.

Those PCs who are interested in the origin of this asteroid facility will not be disappointed. Some poking around in the forgotten storage areas will reveal some unused tunnels. These lead further into the asteroid. Inquiring into the tunnels will elicit shrugs from the pirates. At a certain point they just stopped caring about where the tunnels led, and in their time here, they have been more concerned with feeding themselves and remaining hidden than exploring the asteroid.

Further exploration will reveal a much larger facility than anyone expected, and perhaps some unfriendly creatures. The origin of any creatures and the asteroid facility itself is left to the GM's imagination.

**Remnants of a Long Dead Race:** AC: 6, HD: 3, AB: +3, Damage: Claw: 1d6, Bite: 1d6, Blaster Pistol: 1d8+1, Movement: 10, Saves: 13, Skills: Sneak +1, Notice +2. *Resistances:* Scaly hides reduce damage from heat attacks (plasma included) by ½.

### *NPCs:*

**Avia Qin:** A miner and smuggler on Zehir who is considering leaving the Lepra system (25F). A short, fit woman with brown hair and a sullen disposition, Avia is a hardened miner who has travelled to Lepra to make a fortune. She is a dedicated hard worker who has spent time in rough industrial jobs. This is the first time she's working as an independent operator, and the entire experience has not been fruitful. Avia is in trouble: she owes Gure Gauza loan sharks back on Meza Virs a tidy sum. She managed to flee an indentured servitude contract, but is increasingly convinced that someone on Zehir or the station is tracking her. Worse still, mining is not as lucrative as she was led to believe. Much of her profits are eaten up by equipment costs or administrative fees. She is considering abandoning her claim and seeking refuge among the in-system bandits in the asteroid belt; they owe her a favor and she is calling it in.

**Marty Phillipos:** Proprietor of the Red Rock Saloon on Zehir Station (37M). Marty is a very greedy individual, who will do nearly anything to turn a profit and line his pockets. This includes tipping off pirates and the Gure Gauza to the comings and goings of various ships in the Lepra system. He is not to be trusted, though he does serve excellent drinks, and does not water down the alcohol. A guy's got to have standards.

**Miri Podunzk:** Gure Gauza *Laguntz* with absolutely no scruples or morals (54F). A tall, older woman with black hair and youthful, lively, eyes that do not betray her intentions, ever. Miri is a consummate criminal operator. She comes by it honestly: her family has been Gure Gauza for countless generations. She has her hooks into Olafsen (see above), and half a dozen other Zehir station officials and traders. Her extortion and blackmail racket has allowed her to coordinate all the prostitution houses and drug trafficking into Zehir Station, and down onto the moon below. She has yet to make a move on the gambling dens that turn a tidy sum, but she bides her time. Avia owes Miri a sizeable amount of money, and her disappearance will make Miri very, very angry.



**Viktorija Zahora:** Space Pirate Leader (34F). Zahora is a survivor, and has led her motly band of survivors from system to system, until they happened upon their base in the Lepra system in a stroke of questionable fortune. Since then, Zahora has kept her people alive, trading their ill-gotten gains for vital supplies and occasional medical services. She met Avia years ago on Meza Virs, when Avia escaped her indentured servitude contract and helped Viktorija to escape as well.

**Space pirates** Most of these pirates operate small shuttles or fighters, but their largest ship is the *Santa Lucinda*, a patrol-boat sized raider. The pirates and their families have lived here for a decade or so, and are well-accustomed to the harsh conditions of the system, as well as the confines of their home. On occasion, they will drill out to other systems like Abreia, Lur, Yama, or even occasionally Meza Virs to prey on merchant shipping. The pirates are not particularly brutal, but have become a bit more than a nuisance in the Lurian Trailing Cluster. Unfortunately, no one has been able to locate their base.

### COMPLICATIONS:

1. **Solar Flare:** Lepra is an angry white giant star. A solar flare here is a true catastrophe, and the PCs will have to find cover in a hurry to avoid the worst of the radiation, even this far out.
2. **The Gure Gauza have a ship,** and they are following the PCs. Unless they can shake their pursuers, the PCs will not be able to meet the pirates.
3. **Avia Qin is a pirate:** the whole job is a set-up, and she plans on sabotaging the ship so that her pirate compatriots can take it over.
4. **Miri Contacts the PCs:** She has heard that they have taken a job, and was wondering if she could meet with them to help her expand her business. Will the PCs betray Avia for a cut of Miri's growing criminal enterprise on Zehir Station?
5. **The Remnants of the Long Dead Race:** There are many of them, now waking up from cryogenic sleep, since the PCs disturbed their resting place. They are going to eat everyone on the pirate asteroid, commandeer the ships nearby, and cause real havoc.
6. **The pirates are slavers:** Avia does not know this, and she is unknowingly leading the PCs into a fight for their lives.

### LUR (LTC1 25)

Adventures on Lur can run the gamut from high tech corporate espionage, to exploring jungle-covered ruins. Many Lurians are excited about their re-emergence into space, but some are quite reluctant to rejoin the rest of insterstellar civilization. Most of the adventures on Lur will involve the Merchant Houses, or the Lurian Republic, or some combination thereof.

**14. CHOW'S JOB:** the PCs have to placate some honest-to-god pirates for a Merchant House, and in doing so, anger people on the high seas. Will the PCs survive an attack by a rival Merchant House? Will they be able to placate the pirates who think that they've been double-crossed? And will the PCs figure out who sold them out?

**Outline:** The Six Merchant Houses of Lur are technically adhering to a mutually beneficial business arrangement called the Ten Year Agreement. The Agreement, which is effectively a "peace treaty", has allowed the Merchant Houses to cooperate on all matters relating to astronautic technology, space colonization, and the building of a Lurian Space Navy. However, this "do-not-compete" arrangement does not extend to more mundane matters of commerce on Lur itself. House Basit, a major force in Lurian transport and shipping, has been experiencing an uptick in seaborne piracy of late. The PCs are hired to transport a consiliatory message to the pirates, as well as a small fortune in goods and hard currency to buy the raiders off and get them working for House Basit. While things begin well enough, someone has leaked the position of the pirate base, and a strike team arrives to quash the House Basit-Pirate deal with extreme prejudice.

**Player Briefing:** the PCs are contacted by James Marsters Chow, an up-and-coming VP in House Basit's maritime shipping division. He is looking for a group of hardy couriers to rendezvous with the freighter *SS Red Gull* and make with all haste to the northern Sakona Ocean. There, they will wait for nomadic sea-people to arrive. Chow refuses to refer to them as pirates, as the first step in what he considers a very arduous branding campaign. The PCs will carry out negotiations on behalf of House Basit to secure a treaty between the merchant house and the sea-people. They will be furnished with a large supply of hard currency and usable goods to trade for the goodwill of the sea-people. Payment is 4000Cr. per person in the group, half up front, and a free flight to the island port of New Haven, to rendezvous with the freighter. Full payment is contingent on a successful negotiation with the pirates. Should the PCs negotiate a particularly good deal for House Basit, Chow will offer them an additional 500Cr per person, and will keep them in mind for future work.

**GM Details:** The pirates are indeed a group of nomads who have been living on the high seas since before the Deluge. They are not particularly bloodthirsty, but are currently taking advantage of the economic upswing Lur is experiencing in the only way they know: piracy on the high seas. The pirates are based out of a long-abandoned oil derrik, and have a number of hidden coves and beaches on various islets across the Ocean. Their leader, Kopka “the Implacable”, is a savvy and cunning negotiator. House Basit has been hit particularly hard by these nomads, if only because they’re the dominant shipping company in this part of the Sakona Ocean. Chow is being generous and proactive. He wants to coopt the nomads, and use them as a force for House Basit. Unfortunately, he’s made a major oversight.

These pirates have been relatively civil in their raiding and thievery, and have not resorted to much bloodshed beyond the occasional roughed-up crewmember. Unfortunately, there was one episode which saw pirates murder three sailors employed by House Basit. Kopka regrets the action, and is relieved that House Basit wishes to move forward as well. Unfortunately, some of the crew of the *SS Red Gull* were friends with the murdered sailors. The first mate, Jason Berchez, is seething with rage that House Basit would sign a treaty with these “pirate scum.” He will be noticeably agitated about the mission, but unless a PC spends a great deal of time with Berchez, or uses a psychic power to probe his mind, he will keep his plans secret. Berchez will use a radio transmitter to secretly send the location of the pirates’ oil derrik to a House Sakhalin contractor. A well-armed strike team will attack the pirates’ base while the PCs are there celebrating the successful negotiation of the deal. The PCs are targeted as well, so they have everything to lose by not helping defend the oil derrik.

Naturally, Kopka will suspect that Chow is double-dealing. It will be up to the PCs to diffuse the situation, and track down Berchez to salvage the deal with House Basit, and get paid. A successful adventure will leave the PCs richer, and in the good graces of both House Basit, and a group of nomadic sea-peoples in a remote corner of the Sakona Ocean. It might also leave House Sakhalin smarting, so discretion and minimal property damage might be the order of the day here.

### **NPCs:**

**James Masters Chow:** 31M House Basit VP of Shipping Operations: New Haven/Mill Harbour. Chow is the scion of a powerful family well-positioned in the Basit Merchant House. He works tirelessly to advance the position of his house and his family and has been very successful. He has offices in Saleros, Voltaire and New Haven. Chow is a pleasant person who likes his job, his friends and his social position. He is a solid, reliable person to know. He is also swayed easily by financial concerns, being a VP for one of the six Merchant Houses for a reason. He does not respond well to attempts at bribery, but does repay favours in kind.

**Captain Neil Ragana:** 54M, Captain of the *SS Red Gull*, a tramp steamer operating out of New Haven. A savvy 25-year veteran of Lur's sea shipping lanes, Ragana has seen every corner of every waterway and ocean on Lur. He has little patience for dilettants (the PCs) but does understand that special jobs require special considerations. Although his primary motivation is profit, Ragana cares for the well-being of those who serve with/under him.

**First Mate Jason Berchez:** 31M, first mate aboard the *Red Gull*. Tough, rough, and sporting multiple scars, Trill does not shy away from a good fight. He is a very loyal and dogged defender of his friends, and of "good" in general. He will have a harder time than most handing over tribute to pirates on Lur, and might make negotiations difficult: there have been other ships that have lost crew to these pirates in the past.

**Jason Berchez:** AC 14, HD: 2, AB: +3, Damage: 1d8 Revolver, 1d4 Club, Saves: 14, Movement: 10, ML: 7, Skills: Exert +2 (Swimming) Pilot (Sea) +2, Lead +1

**"Kopka the Implacable"—Marta Von Apfel:** 36F, the leader of the Sea People. Marta is a great leader of her pirates/nomads because she is stern and just. If she is treated with respect, then she will abide by the "treaty" with Chow. She also likes turning a profit and living it up with her ill-gotten booty. Yarr. Marta Von Apfel grew up among the Sea People of the North Sakona Ocean on Lur, and has risen to become one of their most effective leaders. She is not bloodthirsty, but understands how business is occasionally done. Marta developed the "Kopka" (she picked the name out of a book) persona to instill fear in those her pirates preyed on. She has not been picky about her targets, but is about to become political as she deals with one Merchant House at the likely expense of another. However, she needs the supplies and wealth that House Basit offers. Her pirates are her family, after all.

**Kopka the Implacable:** AC 14, HD: 4, AB: +5, Damage: 1d6 Primitive Blade, 3d4 Sawed off shotgun. Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 11, Skills: Lead +3, Talk +3, Survive +2

**The Sea People of Lur:** Lurians have been on their own for six centuries, and before that, the planet was settled by people looking to get away from the big government of the Terran Authority. The Sea People that the PCs are tasked to negotiate with are a TL2 micro-society that has "gone native" on their own planet. They are not entirely self-sufficient, and supplement their occasional trading with remote settlements with some piracy. Roughly 200 people make the remote, delapidated oil derrick their home, and only a tenth of those are hardy enough to be considered warriors.

**Average Sea Person:** AC: 12, HD: 1, AB: +1, Damage: 1d4 small primitive weapon, Saves: 15, Movement: 10 ML: 8. Skills: Pilot +2 (Water), Exert +2 (Swimming)

**Sea Person Warrior:** AC: 15, HD: 1, AB: +3, Damage: 1d10 rifle, or 1d8\* SMG. Saves: 14, Movement: 10, ML: 9, Skills: Pilot +2 (Water), Exert +2 Sneak +1, Tactics +1

**House Sakhalin Strike Team:** This group of mercenaries has been subcontracted by House Sakhalin to do the dirty job of liquidating the Sea People. Their combat abilities and numbers should provide a tough challenge to the PCs.

**Elite Corporate Strike Team:** AC 15, HD: 2, AB: +4, Damage: 1d12\* Assault Rifle, Saves: 14, Movement: 10, ML: 10. Skills: Exert +2, Sneak +2, Tactics +2

**COMPLICATIONS:** This adventure hinges on a complication, but a few more can be added to further spice things up.

1. **The PCs encounter a particularly terrible storm**, and are forced to rely on their new hosts to survive.
2. The SS Red Gull is **attacked by other pirates**. Yo ho ho!
3. The SS Red Gull strikes an **uncharted reef** and begins sinking. Can the PCs stave off disaster long enough to be rescued?
4. The PCs discover a **long-lost pre-tech cache** when visiting the Sea Peoples' oil derrick. Will they attempt to liberate the treasure?
5. Kopka and her Sea People are **bloodthirsty cannibals**. James Marsters Chow was hoping to curry favour with the pirates by offering them dinner.
6. A PC falls into the cold sea, and cannot swim.



**15. THE CHILDREN OF LIBERTY:** Are Henry David Thoreau’s ideas dead, or just resting? The PCs have to retrieve a lost little lamb, rebelling against his wealthy parents. Only he is not so little, and he is not so lost. Are the PCs foolish enough to get involved in radical anti-government politics, if only to take advantage of an opportunity to fly an ultralight autogyro? Or will they scrub this mission and avoid a major headache?

**Outline:** A business contact of one of the PCs reaches out with a special private assignment. The PCs must locate the camp of the radical Lurian Isolationist group the “Children of Liberty”. There, they will locate the businessman’s son, who has been abducted by these radical libertarians, and perform an extraction while ensuring that the young man does not come to any harm.

**Player Briefing:** The PCs will leave from Voltaire for the foothills of the Mendiak Mountains of Lur. Deep in the temperate rainforest is a secluded settlement of Montevideo, belonging to the radical Lurian isolationist faction the Children of Liberty. The settlement is in its early stages: the Children of Liberty have only set up temporary pre-fab shelters and a fusion generator. The goal is for them to become self-sufficient within a year. Much of the financing for this colony comes from Duane Beck, son of the wealthy Saleros trader Marlo Beck. The elder Beck believes that his son was brainwashed, or abducted, or otherwise conned into providing the Children of Liberty with funds, and would like the PCs to go to Montevideo and retrieve Duane. The PCs will have to impersonate new members of the Children of Liberty, and will arrive with a supply shipment Duane ordered through his father’s connections. Mr. Beck is happy to support the Children’s right to exercise political isolation in the long-established Lurian tradition. As such, he will not endorse the wholesale destruction of the settlement or particularly egregious displays of violent force. However, he does understand that if Duane is being held against his will, things might have to get a little ugly.

**GM Details:** The information that Marlo Beck provides the PCs is thorough: full profiles on the leadership of the Children of Liberty at Montevideo, satellite photos of the settlement, as well as forensic accounting records that trace their source of funds back to Duane. Unfortunately for the PCs, the intelligence provided does not include the fact that Duane Beck is a committed member of the Children of Liberty, and was not in any way kidnapped or brainwashed. He absconded with his father’s money after a particularly nasty argument about life choices, and decided to put his money where his mouth is. He will resist extraction with as much energy as he can, and the PCs might be forced to sedate or otherwise render him incapacitated.

Montevideo is an ambitious settlement: there are pre-fab TL4 colonial style structures in place designed for long-term habitation. Water filtration and power generation are at cutting edge TL4 levels, and everyone goes to sleep in a warm bed, and food and water are safe to consume. Security measures are minimal, since the settlement is quite literally in the middle of nowhere. A two person perimeter patrol ensures local security, but they are fairly lax in their protocols. Personal firearms are

stored in an armory, and are used mainly for game hunting and pest control. The local fauna can be dangerous, so traipsing around alone in the forest, especially at night, is discouraged. The settlement contains a small clearing that is used as an airfield for supplies and new arrivals via chartered VTOL. The Children of Liberty also have a handful of dirt bikes, tractors, and a small one-person ultralight autogyro that they use for scouting and joyrides.

Montevideo was chosen not only for its remote location, but because it hides a secret known to the senior leadership of the Children of Liberty. Near the settlement is a bunker dating back to the original settlement of Lur. This period is considered the “Golden Frontier Age” when many individual colonists were eager to strike out on their own and live as far away from any regulation as possible. This small complex is located a few hours by foot away from Montevideo, and is buried deep underground in the bedrock. The leaders of the Children of Liberty are going to set up an expedition to recover whatever can be found within, but have not been able to determine if there are any lethal security measures that need to be dealt with beforehand (there undoubtedly are!).

### *NPCs:*

**The New Children of Liberty Settlement at Montevideo:** This small settlement of idealistic young people and starry-eyed dreamers will be viable after hard work, sacrifice, and a lot of luck. The population is currently at 65 people, with a handful of new volunteers arriving every few months. A small number of original colonists have left, after finding the hardships of frontier living unbearable. The colonists are focused on the cultivation of exotic fruits and the growing of coffee in the highlands to turn a profit. Right now though, much work still needs to be done.

**Duane Beck:** 25M, the young scion of a minor merchant house, Duane is using his trust fund and his personal fortune to fund this settlement. He is a good looking kid with green eyes and scruffy blond hair. He wears a beard and functional clothing.

**Sanjay Palayo:** 26F, a former office administrator who became enamoured with the lifestyle the Children of Liberty were offering. She is capable, but is having a difficult time adapting to the rough wilderness living that is required right now. She has typically dark hair and a dark complexion, and wears an ill-fitting set of work clothes.

**Jakob Krohn:** 30M, a soft-spoken, unsure man thrust into the leadership role by popular acclamation. Krohn is sensitive and perceptive, but does not have the confidence to be an effective leader. He might grow into the role, given time.

**Zila Sinesh:** 24F, the most competent technician on site. She is, unfortunately, reckless and does not do her job as well as she should. Her lack of care will put others in danger. Zila is good looking, though grimmer than most.

**Charles Grissom:** 31M, the ideological force behind the settlement at Montevideo, Charles is a true believer in the Children of Liberty's cause, and is willing to risk lives to establish a "true frontier" settlement here in the Mendiak foothills. He chose Montevideo's location after he discovered the existence of the original bunker in his university research.

**COMPLICATIONS:** Plenty of things can go wrong in this scenario, in addition to the fact that the PCs were supplied with faulty intelligence about their target.

1. The PCs reach Duane, but instead of being a willing participant, he is **actually a victim of kidnapping** or an elaborate con. This means that he is being watched, and when the PCs make contact, they will reveal themselves. The Children of Liberty will be ready to deal with interlopers.
2. **Duane Beck is dead**, either murdered once control of his funds was given over to the leadership of Montevideo, or by accident due to the hard life in the highlands.
3. The original colonial-era bunker has a **malfunctioning security system** that includes a number of heavily armed robots.
4. **The PCs arrived as new volunteer colonists.** They must blend in, and do hard frontier tasks like clearing trees, ploughing fields, and dusting crops with the autogyro. Hijinks ensue.
5. The colonists at Montevideo are not militarized nor particularly inclined towards violence. However, a group of **militant Children of Liberty** arrive and take over the settlement just after the PCs arrive. Now the PCs will have a much harder time extracting Duane Beck.
6. A particularly **rough storm hits the highlands**, causing landslides, or a forest fire. The PCs must work with their new colleagues in the Children of Liberty to survive!



**3. THE GREENER PASTURE JOB:** The PCs are hired to carry out the most epic industrial espionage job in Lurian history. A Spike-2 capable starship was recently recovered, and someone wants it for themselves. The PCs must smuggle themselves on board a top secret Lurian Republic Navy deep space station, and figure out a way of getting off the station in the cockpit of that ship.

**Outline:** The Lurian Republic is capable of building Spike-1 drives, though the process is slow and expensive. Most of the ships Lur has put into space have Spike drives that were cannibalized from a number of non-functioning drives, or refurbished with the help of the Karta Trading League, a generation ago. Having spike drives is great, but the Lurians are hampered in their ability to explore beyond the Lurian Trailing Cluster. Recently the Lurian Republic Navy launched a major salvage operation that recovered a barely-functional Spike-2 drive in a small derelict merchant ship. The Navy has secreted the vessel away on their most remote deep-space station, and is desperately attempting to reverse engineer the drive.

Naturally, this is the worst kept secret in all of Lur, and every major party on the planet is interested in getting their hands on this windfall.

**Player Briefing:** The PCs are hired to get on board the Lurian Navy's space station and abscond with the Spike-2 drive designs, or, if possible, the actual vessel itself. They will be paid extremely, extremely well upon successful completion of the job only: in part because it is a near-impossible heist, and in part to deter the PCs from taking the designs (or the ship) and disappearing. Their patron is able to provide them with the layout of the space station, as well as its location far beyond the Oort Cloud of the Lurian system. Whatever expenses the PCs incur will be covered by the patron, as long as they can be justified. Successfully pulling off this heist is the best justification for expenses. The PCs must ensure that there is no way for the Lurian Government to trace the heist back to the patron. How the PCs make their way on and off the space station without getting caught is entirely up to them.

**GM Details:** This is the heist of the century. The stakes are high, the payoff is huge, and the margin for error is very, very thin. Worse still, the PCs are not the only group making a play for the Spike-2 drive designs. More on that later.

The Lurian Republic Deep Space Naval Facility Delta-2 is a small facility, housing only fifty technicians, soldiers and scientists. It has only a half-dozen airlocks, and only one cargo bay large enough to fit a shuttle. The main security feature of Delta-2 is its sheer remoteness. It will take a Spike-1 equipped vessel 4 days to travel to the station (radio signals take over half a day), which is quite literally in the middle of *nowhere*. There is nothing out this far, and any approaching vessel will show up quite clearly on any sensors. Delta-2 station is armed, but is not designed for a slug-fest—its laser array is designed to prevent any rare collisions with deep-space objects. A single Spike drive-equipped shuttle makes a

supply run to Delta-2 every two months. Personnel on the station are usually long-term inhabitants. Some soldiers and technicians are on a six month rotation.

Security features on the station are minimal. Everyone on Delta-2 has already gone through thorough security screening procedures, and everyone on the station is involved in the reverse-engineering project in some way or another. The Lurians have put all their eggs in one basket, and are not encumbering the people working on the project with additional security. There are a half-dozen security personnel on the station, each hand-picked and well-aware of the sensitive and valuable nature of what they're protecting. Simply put, in order to pull off this heist, the players will have to dig very deep, and use all their most valuable resources. This is not a job for novice players, nor low-level characters.

The Spike-2 drive itself is still on board the merchant ship, the *Greener Pasture*. It was found derelict a few months ago, and was discreetly towed to Delta-2 once its value became clear. The Lurians have supplied the ship with basic power and life support, for work to move quickly. The schematics of the Spike-2 drive are on the station's central mainframe computer. However, given a few minutes of preparation, the *Greener Pasture* can be made spaceworthy, and even capable of a spike drill to another system.

Note that there is no right or wrong way for a group of players to approach this challenging mission. The GM can encourage all sorts of plans, but really, whatever plan the players come up with will either work, or it will not, based on the roll of the dice, the judgement of the GM, and the soundness of the plan. However, one major unexpected complication will arise that could spell disaster for even the most professional group of thieves: another group of operatives will attempt to steal the plans while the PCs are on board the station.

### **NPCs:**

**Captain Russ Kassan (54M):** the Lurian Republic Navy has entrusted the reverse-engineering of the *Greener Pasture's* spike drive to its most capable, most fastidious, and most brilliant military mind. Captain Kassan is as good as they come, and he runs the Delta-2 facility with a keen eye for security and efficiency. Kassan is getting a little frustrated by some recent delays, but he is confident that he will have a functioning spike-2 drive installed on a Lurian ship within six months. Kassan is a solid, inspiring leader, who knows the people on his station and their capabilities. If the heist is successful, the PCs will have made a personal enemy of Kassan.

**High Security Station Commander:** AC 15, HD: 6, AB: +7, Damage: 2d6 Void carbine (pistol), Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 11, Skills: Lead+3, Talk +3, Notice +2, Connect +1.

**Dr. Sadaf Mustwafa (43F):** Dr. Mustwafa is the lead scientist working on the spike drive. She is a brilliant aeronautical engineer, who was seconded by the government from her prestigious position at the Voltaire Astronautic Academy. She is resentful of that, but otherwise excited to be working on this project, even if it means that she is “putting together Frankenstein’s Monster”, rather than developing a Spike-2 drive herself. Dr. Mustwafa has never been in space before, and despite the artificial gravity on the station, she is constantly suffering from motion sickness-induced nausea.

**Jeff Lazarus (31M):** The leader of a group of four operatives who have smuggled themselves on board Delta-2. Jeff is a psychic, who specializes in Teleportation and Precognition. This means that he is able to divine passcodes for security systems and can teleport to any location on the station that he’s seen. Jeff Lazarus is charismatic, and especially good at talking his way in and out of trouble. He and his operatives are going to make their move soon, but the arrival of the PCs pushes their timetable ahead. Jeff knows competition when he sees it, but he will not sound the alarm. It’s much more interesting this way. Jeff is a level 6 Teleporter and Precognitive. He has mastered up to level 5 in teleportation, and level 3 in Precognition.

**Jeff Lazarus:** AC 16, HD: 4, AB: +4, Damage: 2d6 Thermal Pistol, Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 11, Skills: +3 Stealth, +2 Persuasion, +2 Notice, +2 Combat/Psitech. **Powers:** Teleportation 3 Precognition 2. **Techniques:** Proficient Apportation, Spatial Synchrony Mandala, Effortless Apportation; Intuitive Response, Alternate Outcome.

**Operatives:** AC 16, HD: 4, AB: +5, Damage: 2d6\* Void SMGs, Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 10. Skills: Sneak +3, Fix +3, Security: +2, Pilot +2.

**Complications:** Merciful game masters might want to keep additional complications to a minimum. However, we at Stellagama Publishing believe that “merciful game master” is an oxymoron.

1. **A station-wide malfunction** has everyone working to avoid major catastrophe. Do the PCs make their move on the drive while everyone is busy, or will they help out? And which choice increases the chances of them getting caught?
2. A surprise security inspection.
3. **The PCs are hired by the Lurian Republic Navy to test the security of the Delta-2 station.** They are not to steal anything, but will be paid handsomely. They are also not to use lethal force.
4. **Pirates aligned with the Gure Gauza (LTC1 19)** discover the station! They are going to board Delta-2, overwhelm the security personnel, and take many prisoners. Can the PCs stop them?
5. **A freak astronomical phenomenon**, like cosmic rays or an asteroid field, disable the station. Help is four days away, and many will perish unless the PCs can do something.
6. **The PCs’ operation is a set-up and distraction** to allow another group of operatives access to the Spike-2 drive. Will the PCs take the fall and end up in a Lurian prison?

### MEZA VIRS (LTC1 43)

Adventure opportunities here abound. The wild and dangerous planetary ecosystem has reclaimed most traces of humanity here on Meza Virs. This planet was once a jewel of Terran colonization efforts, and untold riches still lie unclaimed in the expansive ruins of at least half a dozen pre-Deluge metropolises. The society that survives on Meza Virs is not a pleasant one. Life is cheap, slavery is legal, and the city states of the Banda Basin wage constant war on one another. The Gure Gauza run their slave market in the cesspool of Yukatan, and the KTL get rich off this illicit trade. Meanwhile, in the highlands and jungles on the edge of civilization, the warlord Yosef Khaleer plots his next conquest.

**16. BROTHER GILL'S MAGNIFICENT PCs:** The Christian Mission in Fort Johar, just outside of Yukatan, is a place of shelter and refuge for the indigent and the helpless. It is also a secret waystation for the Underground Railroad that smuggles slaves off Yukatan. The PCs are needed to run some supplies out to Fort Johar, and deal with anyone who wishes to stop the supplies from arriving. Once the PCs reach Fort Johar, they will have ample opportunity to explore before some slave-catchers come to wreak havoc.

**Outline:** Slavery is a fact of life on many worlds in the Lurian Trailing Cluster, but none are as deeply affected by this scourge on humanity as the inhabitants of Meza Virs. The Asoka Sklabo slave market of Yukatan is the main hub of slavery in the LTC, and much money is made within its walls. There is, however, a very active and discreet anti-slavery campaign going on in Yukatan. Much if it is organized and led by religious figures in the city. The PCs are hired by one of the Underground Railroad's agents to move supplies to a waystation outside of the city. The pay is good, and the cause is just. The PCs will have to make a three-day journey from Yukatan to Fort Johar, make contact with Brother Gill's compatriots there, and defend the Fort Johar Mission from slave-catching banditos.

**Player Briefing:** Brother Gill, a small-time priest with a reputation for charitable works in Yukatan, approaches the PCs very discreetly. He needs the PCs to act as couriers for him, and transport valuable medical supplies to Fort Johar, three days north of Yukatan. He would make the trip himself, but he's being watched, so this will be the only time he will meet with the PCs. The players can expect all sorts of banditry on the roads, but Fort Johar is relatively safe. Brother Johar offers the use of a very beat up truck to make the journey as ubiquitous as possible:

Beat Up Truck (TL3)			
Speed	0	Km/h Travel	60
Armor	4	Power	3/3 free
Hit Points	20	Mass	7/0 free
Crew	5	Hardpoints	1/1 free
Base Frame	Groundcar (TL3)		
Fittings	3500kg cargo space		

**GM Details:** The PCs will be transporting three units of Postech Medical Supplies, roughly 300kg of valuables, worth 75 000 credits. The truck will need some additional B-cells to make the three-day trip. The voyage is through relatively benign farmland and ruins. The road is not well-travelled. Occasionally the PCs might spot a large animal or other curiosity. The only mandated encounter is with a group of bandits who are interested to see what the PCs are carrying in the truck. These bandits are not affiliated with any slavers, but their intent is not at all honorable.

If the PCs survive the encounter with the bandits on the road, they will make it to Fort Johar without further incident. The village is small, hidden in the ruins of a large coastal city. Much of it is overgrown, and many of the villagers farm on old concrete terraces. The village is centered on a small church, the Fort Johar Mission, nestled in a square, surrounded by small huts and other lean-tos that make up the village. This TL1 village is one of the first stops on the Underground Railroad that leads to freedom further away from Yukatan's slave markets.

The villagers will be wary, but the head of the mission, Sister Abigail, will be very pleased to receive the supplies. In the mission are a half dozen escaped slaves who could not travel further without medical attention. The PCs will have the afternoon to look around, and explore the old city. Many of the locals can confirm that there are unexplored underground tunnels, but no one goes down there. Some exploration of the tunnels might be fruitful: they are a veritable honeycomb of old sewers, shopping malls, and subways. GMs might want to populate them with all sorts of nasty fauna, as well as some valuable pre-tech items for those PCs who are exceptionally enterprising.

Unfortunately Brother Gill's reputation in Yukatan precedes him, and his operational security was not as tight as he would like to think. Hot on the heels of the PCs are a group of ruthless slave-catchers, who will arrive in the late evening and demand that the Mission turn over any slaves within the hour. Failure to comply will result in a massacre in the village. Slaves are not to escape, and those who harbor them are to be punished. The PCs will have that long to prepare for the assault. The defense of the Fort Johar Mission could be the event that solidifies the PCs' reputation as solid operators.

### NPCs:

**Brother Gill:** A Christian priest in Yukatan (31M). Brother Gill is a seemingly fragile, unassuming cleric who keeps out of the spotlight. He has a large following among the downtrodden, the slaves, and the indigent of Yukatan, and does his best to minister to their spiritual and physical needs. Brother Gill has a particular distaste for slavery, and he does whatever is in his limited power to subvert the slave trade in Yukatan.

**Sister Abigail:** A nun who operates the Fort Johar Mission (25F). Sister Abigail is young, capable and energetic. She is also a trained medic, which might come in handy when facing down slavecatchers. The residents of Fort Johar respect her and her work, and she does her best to maintain that respect.

**Sister Abigail:** AC 13, HD: 2, AB: +2, Damage: 2d6 Shotgun, Saves: 14, Movement: 10, ML: 11, Skills: Heal +2, Lead +2

**Pasquale and the Bandits:** The leader of the bandits on the road to Fort Johar (27M). He is a mildly capable combatant. His crew are dangerous only because they are highly mobile: they ride motorcycles and Zirgs, lizard-like riding creatures that are surprisingly agile. They are equipped with TL3 weapons and scrap armor.

**Bandit Leader Pasquale:** AC 15, HD: 4, AB: +6, Damage: 1d8+2 SMG,, Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 9, Skills: Lead +1 Leadership, Notice +2, Pilot +2 (Ground vehicles)

**Bandit:** AC 14, HD: 1, AB: +3, Damage: 1d8\* SMGs. Saves: 15, Movement: 10 ML: 8 Skills: Sneak +1, Exert +2

**Mr. Ekko:** The slavecatcher leader (60M). This ruthless mercenary is neither opposed nor supportive of slavery. He just gets paid very well to catch slaves. He is a reasonable man, however, and will make sure to offer the least bloody solution to the stand-off at Fort Johar first. He leads a dozen hardened killers. They have motorcycles, a large truck (for transporting slaves), and are armed to TL3 standards with some TL4 weaponry.

**Mr. Ekko, Slaver:** AC 14, HD: 5, AB: +6, Damage: 2d6+2 Mag Pistol, Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 10, Skills: Notice +2, Pilot +2 (Ground), Exert +2, Talk +3, Lead +1

**Slavers:** AC 12, HD: 1, AB: +3, Damage: 1d8\* SMGs or 1d10+2 Rifles. Saves: 14, Movement: 10 ML: 8, Skills: Pilot +1 (Ground), Exert +2

**COMPLICATIONS:** There are plenty of variations that GMs can add to the basic premise of this adventure.

1. **The tunnels are important:** The PCs find something very interesting in the tunnels. Or perhaps the tunnels provide an escape route. But where do they lead, and how dangerous are they?
2. **Pasquale is a Magnificent Bastard:** A former slave recognizes slavecatchers, and Pasquale is no different. When he sees Mr. Ekko's convoy drive by, he decides to follow. If the PCs did not destroy the bandits, they may have an unexpected ally.
3. **A terror awakes:** The tunnels are left alone for a reason. When the fighting starts, something very horrible emerges and wreaks havoc! The PCs have to deal with this new threat before it eats them!
4. **The cargo:** the PCs were not transporting medical supplies. They were transporting slaves, in stasis. This makes them complicit in the Underground Railroad.
5. **The cargo:** the PCs were not transporting medical supplies. They were transporting valuable stolen goods used to finance Brother Gill's operation, which has nothing to do with rescuing slaves!
6. **The road is not easy:** beasts, storms, or more bandits make the trip to Fort Johar a bigger part of the adventure.

**17. EMMISARY FOR THE DEVIL:** Yosef Khaleer wants to burn Yukatan to the ground. Yukatan wants to contain Khaleer by forming alliances with other cities in the Banda Basin. Khaleer needs the PCs to act as his agents. The PCs need cash. Looks like they're working for a barbarian warlord!

**Outline:** Yosef Khaleer, the warlord of Talinn, has consolidated his power in his capital to the east of the Banda Basin, and is slowly moving westward towards Yukatan. This has given the rulers of Yukatan, the crime syndicate known as the Three Families, some cause for concern. Khaleer's agent hires the PCs to act as his chief negotiators to the city state of La Paz. The goal is to prevent the Yukatan delegation from signing an alliance with La Paz against Khaleer.

**Player Briefing:** Khaleer's agent, Fenton "the Toad" Lipetsk, is a seedy and untrustworthy character to begin with. The fact that he is willing to work as an agent for Yosef Khaleer should be of no surprise. The PCs are hired in Yukatan because they have a starship. Lipetsk tells them to go to Talinn, and speak with Khaleer directly, as he is unable to make the voyage.

In Talinn, Khaleer will get straight to the point: his territorial gains and his army have made Yukatan nervous enough to consider forming alliances with other city states to hem him in. He needs the PCs to arrive in La Paz in their starship, and spoil any attempts the Yukatan envoy makes to form an alliance with La Paz. He does not want, nor particularly need, La Paz to view him favorably. Just make Yukatan's rulers look like the scheming, atavistic, slaving bastards they are. Khaleer gives them authority to negotiate on his behalf—though he would prefer they do not make any real, long-term promises. They are not there to curry favor with La Paz, just ruin Yukatan's diplomatic efforts. Khaleer will stress that killing the Yukatan envoys is not an option, if only because it will drive La Paz into an alliance with Yukatan much faster when the next group of envoys arrive to negotiate.

**GM Details:** Khaleer needs independent agents to work on his behalf because he has a well-deserved reputation for brutality. He is responsible for thousands of deaths, as his army of highly disciplined marauders slowly advances towards Yukatan. The rulers of La Paz are not in Khaleer's path, but that does not mean they aren't worried anyway.

La Paz is a well-fortified city-state in the northern part of the Banda Basin (*LTC1 45*). Should Khaleer move on Yukatan, La Paz would be well-positioned to open a second front on his forces. This is the goal of Yukatan's overtures; to this end, the Three Families have sent their best negotiators via high-speed grav-flyer, and are cautiously optimistic that an alliance can be formed.

La Paz is not opposed to an alliance with Yukatan, but they have their reservations. First and foremost, the slave trade in Yukatan is offensive to La Paz, whose leadership prides themselves on being much less tyrannical business and military leaders, who inherited their power from their parents. Even some tyrants have standards. Their primary demand from the Yukatan negotiators is that all citizens of La Paz be protected from Yukatan slavers in the future, and that all slaves from La Paz, or descended from



citizens of La Paz, be freed, immediately. The Three Families will honor this demand, so long as they were able to wiggle out of freeing all the slaves they've ever captured from La Paz.

Being interstellar travellers with a starship, the PCs will be well-received in La Paz. It would be simple enough to request an audience with the ruling council of feudal oligarchs. The PCs could negotiate a truce between La Paz and Khaleer (though he did instruct against making such promises), but the real goal is to foil the Yukatan diplomatic overture. The easiest way to do so would be to head to Yukatan, and find slaves from La Paz who were not freed once the agreement between Yukatan and La Paz is signed. Once the PCs are in Yukatan, they will be easier targets; they will have to move quickly and quietly to accomplish their goals before the Three Families get wind of their activities.

### **NPCs:**

**Yosef Khaleer:** Warlord of Tallinn (43M). One part Genghis Khan, one part Fidel Castro, and one part Dwight D. Eisenhower, Yosef Khaleer is, undoubtedly, a complicated man. Seemingly arisen from nothing, to command an army of fanatically loyal and highly disciplined marauders, Khaleer keeps his past secret, but his goal is as plain as day: he wishes to see the cesspool that is Yukatan burn. He despises the slave trade, the Three Families, and the Gure Gauza. Khaleer has dramatically and methodically expanded his territory. His capital, Talinn, is a garrison city, run with military efficiency. His administration is brutal but fair, and he takes pains to curb the excesses of most traditional Meza Virs marauders. He takes care to free any slaves that his forces capture. Still, many reports of atrocities committed by his soldiers are true. The rumors of cannibalistic rituals in the dark corridors of the Tzai Khaleer, his personal fortress, are probably overblown.

**Quentin Vermeer:** Chief negotiator for Yukatan (33M): A truly ruthless Gure Gauza hatchetman, Vermeer sees all those around him as disposable commodities. Vermeer was raised in a Gure Gauza family, and has been travelling across the Lurian Trailing Cluster for most of his life. He is equally comfortable in the corporate towers of the Lurian Merchant Houses as he is in the Living Desert of Abreia, or the deep mines of Byalstok. Whatever the task, Vermeer performs it with efficiency and aplomb. He is not pleased to be sent on a diplomatic mission to a podunk backwater on Meza Virs—indeed, he has nothing but contempt for the Three Families of Yukatan—but he is nothing if not obedient to his bosses on Basajaun. Should the GM wish, Vermeer can be a Psychic, with Telepathy and Metapsionics as his two main disciplines.

**Quentin Vermeer, KTL Hatchetman:** AC 15, HD: 7, AB: +6, Damage: 2d6 Thermal Pistol, Saves: 12, Movement: 10, ML: 11, Skills: +4 Stealth, +3 Notice, +4 Business, +3 Persuasion.

**Mira Candrama:** Chancellor of La Paz (78F). The “grande dame” of La Paz’ political class, Candrama is a savvy and cunning ruler. She is interested to hear the offer the Yukatan delegation has for her, but is also interested to see what the PCs offer as agents of Khaleer. She is not particularly enamored with either party; on the one hand, slavery is an offense to her sensibilities. On the other, Khaleer is a notorious butcher; what will prevent him from turning on La Paz once he is finished with Yukatan?

**Kurinn Patel:** A slave originally from La Paz (35F). Patel is a slave captured twenty years ago in the farmlands outside La Paz, when Yukatan raiders ranged that far north. She has been bought and sold a handful of times, and is currently residing in the Asoka Sklabo slave market in Yukatan with another half dozen or so slaves from La Paz who have fallen between the cracks. It will take some footwork for the PCs to locate her, but if they do, they’ll have evidence that Yukatan is not holding up its end of the agreement with La Paz.

**COMPLICATIONS:** This diplomatic mission can have plenty of complications.

1. **Assassins!** The PCs are attacked by Gure Gauza assassins, once their true intentions are made clear in La Paz.
2. **There are no slaves here:** Vermeer is quite thorough, and has either freed all the La Paz slaves in Yukatan, or had them taken away to a hidden location (or worse).
3. **Raiders!** La Paz is not immune to raiding parties. A strong group could pose a serious threat to the city, albeit only for a short while.
4. **Sabotage!** The PCs’ starship is sabotaged, preventing them from leaving La Paz in good time. This will necessitate a side-quest into ruins to find parts.
5. **Vermeer has had enough time to** prepare for the PCs’ arrival, and has convinced the rulers of La Paz to lock up Khaleer’s envoys until the negotiations are complete.
6. **Khaleer is actually much worse than his reputation lets on.** He happily feasts on the hearts of his defeated foes, and is as much a monster as the Three Families makes him out to be.



### MOLOCH (LTC3 XX)

Moloch is a horrible place to visit, for any reason. Adventures here can take place around Persepolis Station—a wretched hive of scum and villainy if there ever was one. Shady deals, corruption, greed, evil, and humanity’s worst vices are all present on Persepolis Station. Danger lurks in every nook and cranny of the station. More ambitious players might want to try landing on Moloch itself and having a look around. This is considered profoundly unwise by the denizens of Persepolis, since no expedition to the tomb world of Moloch has returned, ever.

**18. BAD APPLES:** Moloch has a reputation for turning deals sour. The PCs are on Persepolis Station and whatever is in the water here has just worked against them: their business partner has decided to shake them down. When the PCs refuse to play along, they are run out of town on trumped up charges. But not before they discover the truth: a major Gure Gauza cargo shipment is coming through Persepolis, destined for the Lurian Trailing Cluster. Whatever it is, the fewer that know about it, the better.

**Outline:** The PCs’ trading at Persepolis Station is has attracted some trouble. KTL Factor Diego Vera has decided that whatever it is the PCs are trading in should be subject to a prohibitively steep tariff of roughly 50%. He has decided to seize half of the PCs’ cargo as payment. This should provoke enough of a reaction to allow Vera to sic his security goons on the PCs and drive them off the station—which is the point. The players should get some hints to let them cotton onto the especially shady nature of this situation. The reason for Diego Vera’s duplicity is simple and sinister: a Gure Gauza maltech smuggler is scheduled to arrive at Persepolis Station within the week. Vera wants any and all independent traders deemed even slightly less-than-trustworthy off the station.

**Player Briefing:** One of the PCs’ few reliable contacts on Persepolis, Cal Ithaka, has heard that the Karta Trading League Factor is expecting some sort of important “shady VIP muck-a-muck” to arrive from outside the Lurian Trailing Cluster. Furthermore, this person is probably somehow indirectly related to the slavery racket run out of Meza Virs. Cal is happy to inform the PCs that the KTL is in bed with slavers, though she will not provide any real information about their operation here on Persepolis. The PCs will have to find out that information themselves. With a bit of legwork as the pressure on them to leave grows, the PCs can find out that slave pens are not being prepared, but a secure cargo bay with advanced shielding is instead. This cargo bay is being heavily shielded against dangerous, esoteric particles, so whatever is arriving has to be harmful to the station. Finally, a number of highly moneyed individuals have begun to arrive at Persepolis Station. It looks like some sort of sale or auction is about to begin, and the PCs are not invited! Staying on the station will be difficult, but manageable, especially if a number of bribes go to the right people: Diego Vera does not micromanage his docking bays, and it is always possible to park a party’s starship in a quiet orbit and take a shuttle back to the station.

**GM Details:** Persepolis Station is playing host to an auction for maltech weapons of mass destruction: specifically four suitcase-sized bombs capable of levelling cities and rendering the surrounding countryside uninhabitable for generations. What makes these weapons special is that they are designed to defeat standard TL4 “nuke-snuffers”. The possibilities for terrorism, interplanetary extortion, and driving panicked populations into warfare and depravity are endless.

Ten potential buyers are arriving to bid on the suitcase-bombs. They will each have a small entourage of security personnel and hangers-on. The auction will begin in a few days: 2-5, depending on how much trouble the GM would like the players to get into. Persepolis Station will more closely resemble a combination of high security prison and high-rolling casino during the auction. The PCs will have to be discreet, avoiding anyone who might recognize them, while attempting to carry out whatever plan or heist they are working on.

**In the likely event that the PCs plan on stealing the bombs for themselves:** In the spirit of the sandbox-style gameplay that Stars Without Number encourages, GMs should expect that, in addition to foiling whatever nefarious plots the NPC buyers below have in mind, the players might attempt to gain possession of one or more of the suitcase bombs. This is not a flaw in the adventure, and should be considered a given, depending on the players. Should the PCs gain control over a city-destroying TL4 WMD, they will have a great deal of influence over whatever world they should choose to terrorize. However, this all comes at a cost. The bombs themselves are dangerous, volatile, and release all manner of horrible radiation. They are properly shielded on Persepolis, and each buyer has some form of shielded room ready on their ship. The PCs will not have that luxury. The PCs will also have the unenviable task of defeating Persepolis Station security and the security retinues of each of the buyers; they will also gain the notice of the Lurian Republic, as well as Camrosan Hierarchate Intelligence, and the Pact of Koios (*LTC1 22-24*), who will ruthlessly and efficiently hunt the PCs down for possessing forbidden maltech weapons of mass destruction (in the Pact of Koios’ case, they would want the maltech for themselves). That might all be worth it. It might not. That’s for the players to decide.

### **NPCs:**

The identities of these NPCs are not common knowledge to anyone outside of the Gure Gauza and other players in interstellar crime. The PCs will have to investigate their targets should they wish to interact with and manipulate them to their own ends. One thing that the players will quickly discover is that all the buyers hate each other personally, or represent opposing or competing interests.

**KTL Factor Diego Vera:** A decadent spider sitting in the middle of his web (58M). Factor Diego Vera is a major player in the Consolidator faction of the Karta Trading League (*LTC1 17*), and has been running Persepolis Station and its trading operations for over a decade. He works hand-in-hand with Buru Biaseh (below) to make sure that the Karta Trading League and Gure Gauza become richer and richer with every shipment that passes through Persepolis. Vera's vision is to one day see the KTL merge successfully with the Gure Gauza. He has never broached the subject to Biaseh. Diego Vera will be bidding in the auction for the maltech weapons. His goal is to greatly strengthen the hand of the Consolidator faction.

**Cal Ithaca:** A discreet and well-connected trader on Persepolis Station (35F). Cal is something of an enigma, even to her friends. She has solid contacts for jobs, information, and goods that would normally be impossible to acquire here on Persepolis. She manages to keep herself out of trouble with the powers that run the station and the trading that occurs on it, and all this despite being a Lurian native.

**Folarin Biaseh:** Gure Gauza Buru at Persepolis (66M). A cold, cunning, and cruel man who is exceptionally good at his job. Buru Biaseh receives a cut of all underworld traffic entering or leaving the Moloch system, to or from the Lurian Trailing Cluster. This means he has access to exotic goods and relics that do not exist elsewhere in the LTC. He is also one of the main importers and exporters of chattel slaves in the LTC. Biaseh is responsible for importing the four maltech bombs, and will be receiving a percentage of the sales, but he will not be participating in the auction.

**The following NPCs** are the prospective buyers who are participating in the auction. Each of them will have at least one or two bodyguards with them at all times, and a larger group of security, hangers-on, and servants.

**Taimur Najeeb:** Buyer for an unnamed Abreian Northern Warlord (31M). A fearsome fighter and hedonist who will be eager to sample all the illicit delights of Persepolis Station. He is no fool, however, and will be ready for the auction.

**Tan Xi:** Buyer for another unnamed Abreian Northern Warlord (37F). Xi will be most interested in the whereabouts of Najeeb, who she will alternatively try to seduce and murder in order to eliminate him from the auction.

**Maxwell Ormo:** Independent buyer (50M). A last minute arrival to the auction, Ormo is an unknown quantity. He is good looking and spry, but not considered a major player. Surprisingly, Ormo has a great deal of cash for the auction.

**Maria Gironde:** Gure Gauza operative from Kadmon (32F). The Gure Gauza on Kadmon have sent Maria to bid on a maltech bomb, and bring one back to Kadmon to use as a bargaining chip against the three superpowers. Maria has the smallest security retinue, since she herself is a deadly killer.

**Gregor Vivak:** The buyer for Meza Virs warlord Yosef Khaleer (71M). An old and trusted ally of the canny warlord Yosef Khaleer, Gregor walks with a cane, is half-deaf, and is in poor health. He nevertheless keeps a rigorous schedule, and a calm, if utterly ruthless disposition. The Three Families of Yukatan will stop at nothing to prevent Vivak from walking off Persepolis Station with a maltech device. Vivak has some of the best security personnel with him, and they are all utterly loyal to him.

**Quentin Vermeer:** Agent for the Three Families of Yukatan on Meza Virs (33M). Vermeer is a trusted and fearsome agent for the Three Families (*LTC1 46*). Now he has been sent to Moloch to acquire a maltech bomb. Vermeer is a full blown sociopath, and will leave a trail of bodies behind him if that is what is needed to get what he came for. If the PCs have encountered Vermeer before, he will proceed professionally, and calmly exact his vengeance when and if the opportunity presents itself.

**Malachi Ozawa:** Gure Gauza representative from Lur (27M). Ozawa has been instructed to bring a maltech device back to Lur to aid the Gure Gauza in establishing some control over the government there. Ozawa is an ambitious and rather venal young man, surrounded by servants, slaves, and security, at all times.

**Hana Yan:** Agent for Liam Attar of Basajaun (31F). A personal agent for the KTL Consolidator faction head Liam Attar (*LTC1 34*), Hana Yan will be happy to spend her boss' money on a maltech weapon. She is inconspicuous looking, professional, and deadly. Yan has her own agenda, working for the Order of Lazarus (*LTC1 20*)

**Judra Knight:** Gure Gauza buyer from Artume (41F). Judra is blessed with a critical eye and sharp tongue. She will socialize with the other buyers and their entourages with great ease. Her boss at Artume (*LTC2 21*) is very eager to get his hands on a maltech device. Judra is very well spoken and attractive.

**COMPLICATIONS:** Persepolis Station is playing host to a higher class of hardened criminal than it usually does. This clientele is not only exceptionally demanding, but are also looking to buy maltech city-levelling bombs.

1. A **Basajauni resistance cell** (*LTC1 34*) has managed to get onto the station, and is going to attempt to steal one of the bombs. Failing that, they will murder anyone involved in the auction in a bloody and violent display of firepower.
2. One of the buyers is actually a **Guardian Committee agent**. She (or he) and her entourage are ready to make their move at any time, using a combination of surprise and pretech gadgetry.
3. A **life support malfunction** on Persepolis Station is all the cover a **group of professional thieves** need to steal one of the maltech bombs.
4. As #3, but the **life support malfunction is actually quite serious**, and must be dealt with, lest everyone on the station perish.
5. **One of the NPCs or their entourage is a psychic**. Using psychic powers in the Moloch system is a surefire way to torch and become a feral psychic (*p. XX*); the PCs will have to deal with a crazed psychic using wild, unrestrained psychic powers inside a space station.
6. **Betrayal: the suitcase bombs are fake**. When the different buyers realize this, they begin pointing fingers. Tensions rise as guns are drawn.



## **RUDIANOS (LTC2 34)**

Rudianos represents a unique opportunity for adventure. No one has contacted the system or the society that lives on the mainworld for six centuries. This means that the first people to do so will be the first to trade with the Rudianites, the first to learn from them, the first to deal with the excesses of their malformed society, and the first to explore the ruins on the planet's surface.

**19. WON'T SOMEONE THINK OF THE CHILDREN?** The PCs are the first off-world traders to make it to Rudianos. The sky's the limit on trading opportunities, as long as they can hold their noses when dealing with the odious tyrannies of the flying cities. When a priest makes contact and asks the PCs to help him smuggle "feral" children off of the planetary surface, things go sideways. After all, how are kids living on the planetary surface?

**Outline:** The PCs arrive on Rudianos, and meet with the rulers of one of the main flying cities, New Alexandria. They are given celebrity treatment, as this is the first time an off-worlder has made contact with Rudianos in six centuries. The PCs are also given minders, who discreetly keep them from straying too far from the presidential complex and other authorized visiting locales. Once the PCs get tired of their minders, they might find themselves in a rougher part of New Alexandria, witnessing the realities of population control and dictatorship. A smuggling ring contacts the PCs to ask a favor, and the PCs might get entangled in the politics of resistance on Rudianos.

**Player Briefing:** Making it to Rudianos without a spike nav route will be especially harrowing. No one has made the drill in over six centuries, and the nav route in the Flame of Prometheus (LTC2 85) is horribly out of date. A blind drill is possible, but even more dangerous. Should the PCs make a successful drill and arrive in Rudianos whole, it will be worth the risk. There will be markets for the PCs' goods, and they in turn will be able to have first pick of whatever Rudianos has to offer (see trade table on LTC2 35).

Due to its advanced technology, the flying city most suitable for the PCs' arrival is New Alexandria. After being received in diplomatic and celebrity fashion, complete with dignitaries, military review, grav-fighter flyover, dress parade, and all the perks most players dream of for their characters, the PCs will be given a guided tour of the best New Alexandria has to offer. This tour will include stops at the New Alexandria Institute (LTC2 41), a high-tech arcology, a visit to the grav engines that keep the city up, a military base to have a closer look at the cutting edge grav-fighters, and then will end back in the diplomatic compound where Consul Kalum Prescott will turn to business negotiations over trade and technological exchange.



During the guided tour, it will become readily apparent to observant PCs that security minders are corralling them the entire time: some parts of New Alexandria are entirely off-limits to them. The average people of New Alexandria are also kept far, far away from the PCs. This might not bother some PCs, but it should once Prescott and his cronies present the players with their trading stipulations. These are, in a word: gouging. Canny traders will realize that the natives are presenting only certain goods and services for interstellar trade, and in return, they want spike drive technology. Without knowing what their other options are, the players might balk, and want to think about it. Adventurous players might already have plans for sneaking out of the diplomatic compound and looking around New Alexandria. This should be encouraged by all means, as it will permit the players to see the realities of the city and its society.

**GM Details:** This reality is not pretty. Political and personal freedoms are greatly restricted in New Alexandria, though perhaps not with the same barbarity that they are curtailed in other flying cities on Rudianos. Still, the police have a near-free hand when dealing with those they suspect are criminals, dissidents, or who are likely to become either. New Alexandria is also a militarized society, where soldiers are always on the streets, and all industrial and commercial output is given over to the war effort. Whatever wealth remains then falls into the hands of the political elite like Prescott and his friends. Whatever scraps are left over from those vultures might find its way into the hands of certain merchants or other well-to-do citizens. Life for ordinary New Alexandrans is difficult and austere at the best of times. It is made worse by the brutal reproductive policies enacted by all the flying cities of Rudianos.

Players should be treated to the sight of adolescent boys and girls in full combat dress, engaging in exercises, blowing off steam, and even bullying civilians. The New Alexandria Corps' ranks are swelled with indoctrinated, aggressive young people working off their reproductive contract: in order to reproduce legally, each couple must sign a contract which gives their children over to state service for a minimum of five years. More children means more time served. All this is done in the name of survival: with agricultural space limited to mountaintops and the hydroponic gardens in the flying city itself, population growth rates must remain at zero. Those children born without a reproduction contract are considered "feral" and are illegal. When caught, feral children are forced into twenty year service contracts that most do not survive.

The PCs are witness to a police action that successfully rounds up a number of feral children. If they wish to learn more, they can be put in contact with Liss Holt, the owner of a search and rescue operation that has side dealings with those who work to get feral children off the flying city. Holt will not give much information to the PCs, unless they express real interest in smuggling children. If they are deemed trustworthy, then Holt will ask the PCs to move some "cargo". The destination of this

cargo of children is the ghost city of Liepzig: an abandoned, dangerous flying city where feral children from different flying cities are able to live in relative safety. If the PCs are interested in exploring nearby ruins of a civilization that was destroyed by an environmental catastrophe and inevitable social collapse (*LTC2 34*), they might be able to use the ghost city as a base of operations. That is, until the rulers of New Alexandria ask too many questions.

### **NPCs:**

**Kalum Prescott:** Consul of New Alexandria (49M). The dictator of the most technologically advanced flying city on Rudianos, Prescott is a pragmatic, charismatic leader. The Consul is an elected position, though only 500 citizens of New Alexandria are permitted to vote out of a population that exceeds 100,000 people. Prescott does what is necessary for the survival of his city. This includes harsh rationing measures, population control, the occasional “pruning” of excess population from certain neighborhoods, and the continuation of the brutal three-way war against the cities of Sistro and Tadeh. Kalum Prescott makes no apologies for who he is and the society that created him, but he is willing to make the PCs quite wealthy.

**Liss Holt:** Owner-operator of Holt Air Rescue Services (33F). Once a top-rated pilot for the New Alexandria Air Corps, Liss Holt has moved off the flying city. She now resides in a small grav barge that also serves as the base of operations of her business. Holt is a veteran of countless skirmishes and air battles against whatever enemy New Alexandria told her to fight. She was indoctrinated at a young age, and it took years to finally shake the ingrained responses that her training branded on her psyche. Now, Holt uses her piloting skills to help rescue flyers who need help—she employs a large crew of nearly twenty skilled technicians, para-rescue specialists, pilots and medics—and she also uses her rescue service to smuggle feral children out of New Alexandria to Liepzig and other ghost cities. Holt is tough, shrewd, and does not trust many people.

**Timon Nurbery:** A meteorologist in New Alexandria (61M). Dr. Nurbery is an established scientist among the elite of New Alexandria, and considered a polymath scholar. He will be very interested to meet the new arrivals from off-world, and has many questions. Nurbery is also something of a dissident. He knows that the PCs will be strong-armed into handing over spike drive technology if they are not careful. He might be able to help them.

**Nur Jadag:** A dissident priest, sentenced to death for smuggling feral children (44M). The government-controlled news media of New Alexandria have announced that Nur Jadag, a Christian priest, has been caught facilitating the escape of feral children. These children have now been taken into custody and will be indoctrinated into service, once they are old enough. Jadag is unrepentant, and awaits execution by being dropped out of the flying city.

**Tom Hotan:** Teenaged feral child (15M). Young Tom Hotan has lived secretly in the dark corners of New Alexandria his whole life, along with dozens of other feral children. The feral children are a mixed lot. Some are vagabonds like Tom, while others are lucky to have parents with forged procreation contracts that stand up to scrutiny. Most end up captured and used as cannon fodder in New Alexandria's wars. Some, like Tom, are natural leaders, and wish to help others leave New Alexandria for safer homes. Tom is highly skeptical that rich off-worlders who have been given lavish treatment by the elites of New Alexandria will be of any help.

**COMPLICATIONS:** The setting above is presented with as few twists and turns as possible, to allow the GM the opportunity to insert all sorts of complications.

1. **Airstrike!** Forces from Sistro or Tadeh attack New Alexandria while the PCs are enjoying their state dinner. Grav fighters strafe the city, killing scores of civilians. Marines and commandos land to sow havoc and sabotage New Alexandria's advanced grav fighter production yard.
2. **A brutal electrical storm hits**, while the PCs are exploring, either on foot, or in their ship. Harsh electrical storms are common due to the ash and dust in Rudianos' atmosphere. The PCs might be cut off from help due to electrical hazards, or their ship might take damage and force a landing on the dark planetary surface below.
3. **Liss Holt is a government agent:** the PCs have been set up in a plot to imprison them and seize their starship.
4. **The PCs have to land on the surface**, and meet the survivors. These hardy, xenophobic people are not happy that "sky people" have arrived.
5. **A grav generator breaks down:** the city of New Alexandria's grav generators are old and barely understood. When one malfunctions, it sends the city on a rapid descent to a lower altitude before the backups can kick in and save everyone. The PCs might be injured, or they might be in a unique position to help.
6. **The New Alexandrians attempt to imprison the PCs:** this complication is not meant to railroad players, but the truth is that the locals do not have spike drive technology, and would love to recover it. The PCs should be on their guard at all times, and the GM should definitely telegraph that they are not safe at all.

### VANTH (LTC3 XX)

This system is important because it guards the coreward border of the LTC. It also has gas giants as well as liquid water present, making it a useful refuelling stop for ships travelling beyond the LTC. The human society on Vanth is really more trouble than it is worth: primitive, superstitious throwbacks who are kept under the heel of a barely functioning technocratic-theocratic tyranny. That probably won't stop enterprising players from trying to make their fortune on Vanth. But even a little meddling here will have major consequences.

**20. THEY'RE KEEPERS, KEEPIN' US DOWN:** The PCs are laid over while in trade negotiations with one of the few merchants on Vanth who deals with interstellar merchants. This gives them ample time to explore Lunenport. Unfortunately, it also gives them ample opportunity to cause all sorts of social upheaval as they encounter the backwards laws and technologies that oppress the natives. With very, very little effort, the PCs can quickly render the Keepers obsolete. Unfortunately, those with the History skill will know that the political upheavals of ancient Earth's Early Modern period were particularly bloody. Will the PCs allow the Keepers' tyranny to continue in the name of stability and peace, or will they agitate for change, no matter the cost?

**Outline:** The players have the rare opportunity to engage in some large scale social engineering, all in the name of liberty and justice, when they come into contact with the legal and technological tools of oppression on Vanth. The Keepers, a group of pseudo-religious technocrats, rule Vanth by means of the Compact, and the Elixir. The former is an exacting and labyrinthine set of laws governing nearly all forms of human social interaction on Vanth. It was written during the dark times after the Deluge, when the only way to survive was to conform to society's needs. The Elixir, on the other hand, is a seemingly primitive concoction of pharmaceuticals designed to imitate TL4 tailored anti-allergens. Without a monthly dose of the Elixir, Vanthians are rendered unable to digest much of the native biosphere, and would perish in days.

Although the Compact is a social and cultural norm on Vanth, the Elixir is used by the Keepers to maintain their grip on society here. It would take very little effort on the part of liberty-inclined PCs to smuggle enough tailored anti-allergens to Vanth to allow nature to take its course. With the Keepers out of the way, whoever was responsible for Vanth's freedom would have the eternal gratitude of a very large consumer market.

**Player Briefing:** There is no specific "job" in this instance. The PCs have time to explore Lunenport, the largest city on Vanth. They learn that TL1 life was, and still is, nasty, brutish and short. The locals are mainly all xenophobic, superstitious, and completely under the control of the Keepers. The majority of the Keepers are as backwards as their charges, but astute players should be able to easily discern that

the upper-middle tier and senior members of the ruling caste of this feudal technocracy are much more sophisticated.

Player characters will not have much time to act on their suspicions initially, since they will no doubt learn first hand that the Compact prohibits some aspect of their normal behavior as spacefaring freebooters. Getting into trouble with the local constabulary is a time-honored tradition, but in this instance, there's no fun involved. Gunning down town guardsmen armed with halberds and swords gets old, and does little to ingratiate interstellar traders with the merchant elite.

The PCs should also witness a "Dispensary", the ceremony in which Elixir doses are doled out to the citizenry. Obtaining a small sample should not be too difficult, though care should be taken to not break the Compact while doing so. Upon analysis, the PCs will learn that the Elixir is a product of pretech nanofactories, mixed with local ingredients. Any spacefarers with a Ship's Locker will have less sophisticated, but very cheap, tailored anti-allergens designed to make a biosphere like Vanth's miscible. Whatever is going on here, it would take very little effort to smuggle anti-allergens and the means to produce more onto Vanth, and overthrow the Keepers. Whoever came out on top might be induced to trade very favorably with the PCs.

**GM Details:** Not only are the Keepers maintaining their stranglehold on the population through the Elixir, but a few hours' worth of TL4 biochemical analysis will indicate that the Elixir is actually designed to *permanently adapt* the population of Vanth to the local biosphere. That is, with proper administration of the Elixir, the local population would have no need of it, ever again. This is a secret known only to the High Keeper and a handful of his closest advisors.

The PCs should be ready to do a fair amount of legwork to make this sort of scheme work for them. They'll need to smuggle enormous amounts of tailored anti-allergens onto the planet, and set up a distribution network. They'll need to locate and transport a portable autofac to produce more pharmaceuticals. They'll need to find out which of the prominent families, merchants, and trades guilds could be relied upon to revolt once the Keepers' means of control disappears. They'll also need to supply high tech weapons and equipment to the rebels they are supporting, in order to guarantee success.

The Keepers are naturally suspicious of any interstellar traders, and are monitoring any and all interactions between the PCs and the locals with great interest. Their spies are everywhere. It will be inevitable that the PCs will be attacked by the Keepers and their goons. They have some TL3 and TL4 relics to deal with high-tech offworlders, but they don't have the infrastructure to truly threaten the party—unless the players get sloppy. The main challenge for the players will be leading the initial stages of the revolt, mitigating the worst of the atrocities that are bound to happen, and shaping the

future on Vanth. Many will die when the PCs finally incite a full-blown rebellion against the Keepers. It will be their responsibility to prevent the complete collapse of human civilization on Vanth.

**THE COMPACT** deserves special mention, because as the PCs get more involved in Vanth's future, they will come up against and run afoul of this archaic, backwards and entirely ingrained cultural and legal document. The Compact evolved out of the strict set of rules required for survival in an immiscible biosphere, where technology was failing every day. However, as the centuries progressed, the direct link between laws for survival and cultural norms in a pre-industrial society blurred and eventually faded. Anything can be forbidden or taboo on Vanth, because whatever justified the prohibition was somehow important five centuries ago during the Deluge. Below are some random ways the PCs could break the Compact, but GMs are encouraged to develop their own quirks.

1	It is taboo to count people by pointing at them directly. Instead, you should ask them to raise their hats into the air, and count those.
2	One tenth of all prepared food must be left out for the poor, that they may not starve. Not doing so is considered exceptionally rude and haughty.
3	Never point at, nor touch, anything with your toes or feet.
4	Sharing food from the same plate or bowl is a sign of deep intimacy. The PCs should discover this one very quickly.
5	Water rationing is extreme: showers are taken with saltwater, and wasting freshwater is seen as deeply irresponsible.
6	Tattoos, piercings, or any kind of body modification like cybernetics, are strictly forbidden.

### **NPCs:**

**Maria Tritt:** One of the few merchants in Lunenport that will trade with the PCs (51F). Maria is a force to be reckoned with in Lunenport's Merchant district. She has dealt with all kinds, and is notorious among the locals for trading with KTL merchants and other off-worlders who have visited in the past. Her deals have always been scrutinized by the Keepers, and she has no intention of letting a bunch of ambitious off-worlders get her in prison, or worse. Maria is mainly concerned with the accumulation of wealth, but if a PC were to present her with a solid plan for political and social change on Vanth, she might be persuaded to join the cause—as long as she can make money doing so, of course.

**Keeper Johannes Achen:** A powerful man who hunts down those who defy the Keepers (62M). Keeper Achen is quite well-placed in the Keeper hierarchy of Vanth, and normally someone of his rank and stature would have long since retired to a life of relative comfort and ease in one of the Keeper towers in Lunenport. However, Achen is very much a hands-on individual, and has resisted any attempts to remove him from the streets and criminals that he so effectively hunts down. He is an obstinant, resourceful, and downright relentless Keeper, and dealing with Achen will be a major hurdle for the

players to overcome. Achen does not know the secret of the Elixir, and should he learn the truth, his anger against his former Keeper brethren will be righteous indeed.

**Penelope Ashdon:** A young and bright member of a powerful family in Shelburn (24F). Penelope is a talented shipwright in Shelburn, where she studies under her uncle, Vladimir, to some day run a major manufactory for her family. Penelope also has political ambitions beyond being part of the dominant non-Keeper family in her city. She would be a powerful ally among the social and commercial elite of Vanth, should the PCs wish to cultivate her friendship.

**Nathan Boraz:** A sailor among the Free Folk of Yarmouth (34M). A consummate smuggler, Boraz is the master of the ship *Diamond*, which makes regular stops to the main isles of Vanth. He can be relied upon to be untrustworthy and crass; with enough money, however, the PCs should be able to employ Boraz and other smugglers like him to distribute goods across the planet.

**The Mob:** Not a single NPC per se, but any revolt against the Keepers will have to keep the mercurial feelings of the Mob in mind at all times. Players might be able to incite the Mob into accomplishing their goals of liberating Vanth, but they and the GM should remember that the Keepers have been ruling the Mob for centuries. Relying on a large mass of people for anything other than accomplishing violence and mayhem might be very foolhardy.

**COMPLICATIONS:** This scenario invites many a complication. Here are but six.

1. The Keepers might rule a primitive society, but **they themselves are not primitive**. They will draw on secret caches of high-tech weapons and equipment to fight the PCs and their political machinations.
2. Smuggling weapons, equipment, and most importantly, medicine, into Vanthian cities will be increasingly difficult once the hostilities begin. **The KTL can make advances to help the players in their noble quest**. But the KTL will almost certainly become the competition for interstellar trade in the new post-Keeper era on Vanth.
3. **The Keepers hire outside muscle:** another starship arrives to shoot down the PCs' ship and end the revolt. Alternatively, high tech mercenaries arrive to fight for the Keepers on the ground.
4. **A Lurian Republic anthropologist and social activist has gotten wind of the PCs' plans** (perhaps he has visited Vanth and met with the Keepers). He begins a media campaign to discredit the PCs as colonialists and adventurers, and calls for legal action against them until they re-establish the Keepers as the rightful rulers of Vanth.
5. **The PCs' ship suffers a mechanical failure**, stranding them on Vanth, and making the revolt extremely personal.
6. **An epidemic breaks out**, forcing the PCs to ally with the Keepers to save lives.

**21. IZUR—DISCOVERING ALIEN RUINS:** The PCs stumble upon a colony of powerful aliens in hibernation, and inadvertently wake them up. Hilarity ensues.

**Outline:** Izur is an anomalous planet with an Engineered biosphere. The question being: who was it engineered for? How the PCs find out about the anomaly that is Izur is left to the GM: perhaps they discovered the Flame of Prometheus on Artume (*LTC2 47*), which mentions that Izur is an anomaly. Or perhaps they noticed how the denizens of Vanth have a deep superstition involving the planet Izur (the locals refer to it as the “Evil Star”), and, being good cultural anthropologists, realize that the superstition might be based in something real. Clearly, something on Izur is worth investigating. The PCs will discover an alien outpost filled with aggressive, intelligent, hungry aliens in hibernation—that is, until the PCs showed up.

**Player Briefing:** If the PCs have surveyed the Vanth system with any thoroughness, they will have noticed that while Vanth is inhabited, there is another planet that can support life. Izur is not an ideal planet for human settlement, but the biosphere is miscible and the temperature is tolerable. A more detailed survey will reveal that the Izur’s biosphere is the result of deliberate, and all-encompassing, engineering through technologically advanced means. The survey will also locate the ruins of a small pre-Deluge human settlement, and the presence of a power source deep underground. It will not be difficult to locate an entrance to underground passages near the ruins. The passages were not constructed by human hands. The PCs might very well be the first humans to encounter an alien race in the history of the LTC—if they press on.

**GM Details:** The PCs have stumbled on a small colony of Euto-Eutu, an ancient alien species. The Euto-Eutu are a humanoid race of indeterminate age that travelled the stars in enormous hive-ships eons before humanity reached the Lurian Trailing Cluster. The Euto-Eutu were obsessed with establishing colonies and terraforming. Their psychology enabled them to view the passage of time as a meta-dimensional continuum, which, combined with their longevity and high level of technological development, made them very patient; the Euto-Eutu were content to toil slowly and painstakingly to terraform prospective worlds over countless generations. However, this group of Euto-Eutu represented a radical sect that was driven by a sense of urgency and avarice. Breaking with tradition, this sect embraced nano-technology, which was anathema to the rest of their people. They horrified their brethren when they released their nanites on Izur. Their leaders exiled them to Izur, and forced them into hibernation; while they slept in their dreamless sleep, their new home was radically altered at the molecular level to suit their needs. The fruits of their heresy were not to be enjoyed, as their cryo-tomb was sealed. The Euto-Eutu eventually disappeared from this region of space, and the mad exiles on Izur long forgotten.



The Euto-Eutu are humanoid race, with distinct feathering growing out of a rough, rock-like, skin beneath. They are powerfully built, easily stand two meters tall, and have vaguely human faces, without a nose, and a powerful jaw designed for grinding. Though they walk upright, the Euto-Eutu have a tendency to skulk on all fours, prowling around and even crawling along the walls and ceilings of their tunnels. They speak with deep, grinding tones. The Euto-Eutu are asexual, and the ones in the prison-tomb on Izur are exceptionally long-lived. Their cryo-stasis has been intermittent: some of these aliens have woken up, others remain in hibernation. There are roughly one hundred of these creatures on Izur.

The presence of intruders on their sacred world drives the Euto-Eutu here into a murderous frenzy. They alone may possess Izur, the one prize that they were awarded while they were punished for their heresy. Their mad pursuit of converting this planet to their exact specifications leaves no room for alien visitors. The PCs should quickly discover that they are not the first to intrude into the Euto-Eutu's tomb. Others have discovered this place during the colonization of the Vanth system, and never returned. The PCs will discover remains of colonists, explorers and—most notably—a full team of Keepers of the Flame of Prometheus. Most of the organic matter has been destroyed to avoid contamination with the Euto-Eutu environment, but some bits of technology and clothing remain.

The Euto-Eutu tomb itself can contain anything the GM likes. In addition to the remains of previous expeditions, the tomb can house a variety of strange alien artifacts: sculptures and art devoted to the conversion of Izur would be common, as would some basic, if exotic-looking, tools. The nanites that transformed Izur are depleted, though perhaps one sculpture is actually a priceless and monumentally dangerous artifact: it still has basic active nanite matrices hidden inside.

### NPCs:

The Euto-Eutu on Izur form two distinct castes, Artisans and Proles.

<b>Euto-Eutu Artisan</b>			
Armor Class	14	No. Appearing	1-4
Hit Dice	5	Saving Throw	12
Attack Bonus	+5	Movement	10
Damage	1d6 bite, 1d4+1 punch, special attack (see below)	Morale	9

There are not many Euto-Eutu Artisans, but they are dangerous opponents. They are tough and agile creatures, and their great size and strength makes them difficult combatants in melee. In addition to their natural weapons, Artisans have learned how to harness the environment in combat. Once every other combat round, a Artisans can bend the environment to his/her will, with the following results:

1. A concussive blast of force that does 3d6 damage to a five meter radius. Successful Evasion Saves reduce the damage by half.
2. Drastically reduce or increase the temperature of the surroundings. Cold: liquids freeze, metallic weapons can stick to exposed flesh, and unprotected characters take 1d6 damage. Hot: . Open liquids evaporate, and flammable materials ignite, doing 1d4 damage for 1d4 rounds.
3. Barriers and cover: the ground shifts and moves according to the Leader's will, changing shape and turning into barriers, walls, or other structures no larger than an Euto-Eutu (2m tall, roughly).

<b>Euto-Eutu Prole</b>			
Armor Class	13	No. Appearing	3d4
Hit Dice	2	Saving Throw	14
Attack Bonus	+3	Movement	10
Damage	1d4 bite, 1d4 punch, Energy Carbine: 2d6* (30 round magazine)	Morale	10

The Euto-Eutu Proles are less powerful beings than their Artisan counterparts, but they are highly motivated and fearsome combatants in their own right. Their natural toughness is complemented by a highly effective energy carbine that fires in short bursts, using the normal burst rules. This carbine is TL5, and does not require energy cells to recharge: its nanite technology recharges from ambient metadimensional energy, and an empty magazine will be recharged in about 4 hours.

**COMPLICATIONS:** The PCs will have to handle encountering a vaguely hostile, utterly alien race. It will be important to make their lives more difficult.

1. **The PCs have drawn some unexpected attention to themselves;** a rival group of explorers have arrived and are hoping to catch the PCs weakened and disorganized so that they can take credit for discovering this tomb, and any relics within.
2. **The nanites have run amok:** the Euto-Eutu heretics are beholden to the nanites that they created. PCs will have to deal with a swarm of dust that can kill them easily—or perhaps a grey goo of organic and inorganic solids that threatens to engulf them. The Euto-Eutu are doomed, regardless of what the PCs do.
3. **Izur's local fauna is not friendly:** the Euto-Eutu were quite thorough in their biosphere engineering project. The PCs encounter a particularly large predator while traipsing through the steaming alien landscape of the planetary surface.
4. **The Euto-Eutu are not so alien:** Somehow, the alien sect that has been entombed for eons can speak modern English and understands human culture. The Euto-Eutu want to engage diplomatically with the rest of the Lurian Trailing Cluster.
5. **Not so alien, not so friendly:** As above, but the Euto-Eutu are eager to experiment on human samples, and will capture the PCs to expand their knowledge.
6. **They have a ship:** The Euto-Eutu have their own Spike-3 capable vessel hidden on Izur. If they escape from their prison, they will unleash terraforming nanites on any inhabited world in the LTC. The PCs *have* to stop them!

### YAMA (LTC3 XX)

Yama presents players with the unique opportunity to get involved in a global war between two major power blocks. Because the PCs will likely be in possession of a starship, high-tech gear, and probably all sorts of esoteric devices and powers, their services will demand top credit. Adventures on Yama can include anything from running guns, to espionage, to commando operations, to fighting in a full blown advanced TL2 to low-TL3 military engagement.

**22. EVERYBODY COMES TO VERA'S:** The KTL has been making a tidy profit supplying the Maritime Union with war materiel. A Lurian Merchant House rep asks the PCs to do some digging and find out what the KTL has been up to. They can head to Plymouth to meet an information broker named Vera Grant. She can help the PCs find the information they need, for a favor in kind. Naturally, the KTL has their own operators working here too.

**Outline:** House Basit, one of the six Merchant Houses of Lur, has managed to make connections on Yama, and is supplying the Western League with war materiel for a tidy profit. House Basit is very interested in the activities of the KTL, who are supplying the Maritime Union, currently winning their war against the Western League. James Masters Chow, a rising VP in the merchant house, has asked the PCs to head to Yama and act as his eyes and ears there, by spying on the KTL's activities.

The PCs are instructed to meet Vera Grant, a local information broker in the free city of Plymouth. She will have a job for the PCs that will involve them getting right in the middle of the dirty intelligence war between the Western League and Maritime Union.

**Player Briefing:** Vera Grant does indeed have information to exchange, for a favor. She has learned that a Maritime Union officer, Commander Gibril Khatib, has been involved in a scandal that has led to his disgrace and dismissal from the Maritime Union Navy. Grant does not have all the details, but she suspects that Khatib is so disillusioned that it will take very little encouragement to get him to defect. Moreover, Commander Khatib was involved in the research and development branch of the Maritime Union Navy. He knows entirely too much about the KTL's involvement in the Maritime Union's war effort.

The PCs are to journey secretly to Thames, the capital of the Maritime Union, and get Commander Khatib to leave with them back to Plymouth. Grant is vague on the means of persuasion, but insists that Khatib should not be badly harmed, since he could be a valuable asset to both the Western League and the Merchant Houses of Lur. She advises against making too much of a mess in Thames; the Maritime Union Security Services are to be respected.

**GM Details:** This adventure is not for the weak of heart. Travelling to Thames during this shaky truce between the belligerents on Yama is difficult, but not impossible. The PCs should take the trip to Thames aboard a chartered airship, which will give them time to plan, as well as allow them to cross “trip on a zeppelin” off their bucket-lists. The PCs will need forged ID and travel documents, access to local cash (there is no global data network on Yama), and a means of insertion and extraction. They’ll also need to find their way around Thames, a crowded TL2 city of two million people that is under curfew, and is xenophobic at the best of times. Once in Thames, they will have to monitor their target, learn his patterns of behavior, and while avoiding detection from the Maritime Union Security Services. Good cover stories will be crucial, as will establishing multiple safe houses.

Thoughtful PCs can ask Grant for contacts in Thames, and she will provide a name, Abdullah. He will be able to assist, but will require much of the aforementioned liquid assets the PCs bring along. As well, his network of informants in Thames has been compromised.

Vera Grant’s information is accurate, except for one small, albeit crucial missing detail: Commander Gibril Khatib is a patriot, and despite his fall from grace, remains loyal to the Maritime Union. The specifics of the scandal which ended his career can vary, depending on the GM’s taste; Khatib could have been chased out because of office politics in the Maritime Union Navy, sleeping with a superior officer’s wife, sleeping with a superior officer’s husband (homosexuality is forbidden in the Maritime Union), drug abuse, revealing a drug addiction problem in his unit—the list is endless. Still, through it all, Commander Khatib remains a loyal citizen of the Maritime Union. This means that the PCs will either have to abduct him, or convince him to defect. Either task is a daunting one.

The operation will come to a head when the PCs make their move on Khatib and attempt to leave Thames in a hurry. At this point, the Maritime Union Security Services will move in: Abdullah will be arrested and executed, and his entire network, including the PCs, will be rounded up. Escaping the dragnet should be a challenge, but not impossible. Leaving Thames with Khatib will require as much savvy, moxie, and sheer luck as the players have.

If they return to Plymouth, Vera Grant will be impressed, as she has already received word that Khatib perished in a Maritime Union prison along with a number of Western League agents. The information that she can glean from the poor Commander will be worth a great deal to her, and she will hand over a number of data slabs worth of intelligence to the PCs for transfer to James Masters Chow. Naturally, she might have more work for the PCs, if they’re interested in this sort of thing...

### NPCs:

**Vera Grant:** The owner operator of Café Vera, and a mercenary information broker (38F). Part femme fatale, part down-to-earth business owner, and part world-weary traveller, Vera is not from Yama, but has made the planet her home for a decade. Little is known about her past, a situation she prefers. Instead, Grant has made a very good living as a black-marketeer, smuggler, and information broker, working out of her bar in free-wheeling Plymouth. She will enjoy belittling the PCs, working with the PCs, and will even enjoy paying them. She will advise them, however, that she will also enjoy selling them out when the money is right. Vera is an experienced fighter, and most of her employees are able combatants.

**Vera Grant:** AC 18 (Deflector Array), HD: 7, AB: +6, Damage: 1d6+2 laser pistol. Saves: 10, Movement: 10, ML: 11, Skills: Notice +3, Sneak +4 Trade +3, Administer +2

**Commander Gibril Khatib:** A disgraced Maritime Union Navy officer (41M). Commander Khatib was a rising officer in the very competitive Maritime Union Navy until a scandal forced him out of the service in disgrace. He now lives on a half-pay veteran's pension in a blue collar neighborhood in Thames, the Union's capital city. Khatib is a stereotypically straight-laced officer, but he is also dynamic, hard-working and was very good at his job. As previously noted, Khatib has remained loyal to his country, and is not thinking about defecting, despite the fact that he knows he was treated unfairly. The PCs might be able to use this to their advantage, if they get creative. Commander Khatib is short, swarthy, has a bushy moustache, black beady eyes, and smokes cheap cigarettes.

**Abdullah:** An unassuming watchmaker and spy in Thames (55M). Abdullah (not his real name) is a contact of Vera's in Thames, and will be able to help the PCs, as long as they pay cash. He can get them all sorts of information, good forgeries of government ID papers, and transit papers. He can also furnish them with a car, and even a modest—but warm—apartment near Khatib's neighborhood. All this costs money, and the PCs had better bring thousands of Rupiahs (the Maritime Union Currency), or easily tradable items, along with them. Unfortunately, the Maritime Union Security Services have infiltrated Abdullah's network of informants, forgers, spies, and smugglers. The police are waiting for Abdullah to activate his network for a big operation (the PCs' will do fine) before sweeping in.

**Mrs. Rabat:** A Maritime Union Security Service undercover agent (57F). Mrs. Rabat is a trained agent, but is now deemed too old for dangerous field operations. Too valuable to allow to retire, Mrs. Rabat now monitors Commander Khatib from across the street in her small apartment. She has an additional task to perform: should Commander Khatib defect, or be kidnapped, Mrs. Rabat is to terminate him to prevent him from divulging secrets. She has rigged his apartment with explosives on a remote control detonator, and is a crack shot with a rifle.

**Mrs. Rabat:** AC 12, HD: 2, AB: +7, Damage: 2d8 Sniper Rifle. Saves: 14, Movement: 10, ML: 12, Skills: Sneak +3, Notice +3.

**Agent Yamusa:** Maritime Union Security Service counter-intelligence agent leading the operation to capture the PCs (46M). A dour, burned out, and highly competent spy, Agent Yamusa will work a slow and deliberate campaign to ensnare the Western League spies moving on Commander Khatib (the PCs). When he is ready to spring his trap, he will act with all speed. Yamusa can call on a small army of military police and special agents to apprehend the PCs. He will not relent unless the PCs are either dead, or back in Plymouth. Then they are out of his jurisdiction, and the responsibility of the Maritime Union's foreign intelligence agency.

**Agent Yamusa:** AC 13, HD: 3, AB: +5, Damage: 1d8 Revolver. Saves: 14, Movement: 10, ML: 11 Skills: Sneak +1, Notice +3, Connect +2 Stealth, +3 Notice, +2 Security, +3 Tactics.

**Maritime Union Agents:** AC 12, HD: 2, AB: +2, Damage: 1d8\* SMGs. Saves: 15, Movement: 10, ML: 9, Skills: Sneak +1, Notice +1, Tactics +1

**COMPLICATIONS:** A "simple" extraction like this can go horribly sideways.

1. **Commander Khatib is dead by suicide.** The PCs discover this, and must leave quickly before they are blamed and their cover is blown.
2. **Khatib is willing to come along, but he wants revenge** against the people who disgraced him. If the PCs will help him, and he will come willingly.
3. The **means of extraction**—boat, small aircraft, airship—**breaks down** at an inopportune time.
4. The PCs discover from Khatib that the KTL is working hand-in-hand with the Maritime Union, fast-tracking the construction of a **TL4 attack submarine**. One ship like this would change the balance of power against the Western League entirely. Khatib insists that the PCs sabotage the construction, and only then will he leave with them.
5. A Maritime Union operation makes an **attempt to assassinate Vera Grant in Plymouth**. The PCs will have to save her to get the job (or get paid)!
6. **The PCs meet an independent far trader** in Thames who knows them, and promptly blows their cover.

**23. WE WILL FIGHT THEM ON THE BEACHES...:** Their Merchant House patron asks the PCs to drop off a cargo at the Ortik Islands Federation city of Opal, on the island of Megara. Unfortunately, they are unloading cargo just as the city comes under naval bombardment and amphibious attack! Before the PCs can leave, long range bombardment by the Maritime Union flotilla flagship kills scores of innocents. Will they leave the city to its fate, or will the PCs end up fighting a maritime raiding force, defending Opal in a grueling house-to-house battle?

**Outline:** The PCs are tasked to ferry a large cargo from Plymouth to Opal, a major port city in the Ortik Islands Federation. The cargo consists of supplies and cash for privateers operating out of Opal, which has been a major base for commerce raids against the Maritime Union. Unloading the cargo will take time, as Opal does not have TL4 cargo handling equipment.

Halfway through the job, a small raiding party of Maritime Union Navy ships approaches, and begins a sustained naval barrage. The privateering ships are hopelessly outmatched, and they scatter or are destroyed. The city is badly damaged, but the port facilities have survived. The PCs survive the attack relatively unscathed, but all around them are the horrors of war. The leader of Opal's meager full-time defenses, Captain Shell Trevalian, approaches the PCs for aid in fighting off a looming amphibious assault that will surely see more destruction wrought on the defenseless residents of Opal.

**Player Briefing:** Captain Trevalian is desperate, and so are the citizens of Opal. The city has been badly damaged, and the small garrison of part-time militiamen of the Ortik Islands Federation Army are not up to the task of fighting off well-trained Maritime Union Marines. Trevalian gives the PCs free reign to set up defenses, scout out ambush sites, and formulate their plans. Before the bombardment began, an airship reported that there was a flotilla of six large vessels. With a ship, the PCs will, of course, be able to gather all sorts of sensor data: there are six ships, and at least a dozen amphibious landing craft. As well, long range sensors reveal a flight of four large, long range bombers headed for Opal. They are ten hours away.

The local defenses consist of a garrison of 50 trained soldiers with light TL2 weapons, some light artillery, and few vehicles. They have already taken some casualties, and only thirty soldiers are able to fight. The garrison is under Trevalian's command. The citizens of Opal will volunteer to fight for their city, and the PCs will have ample resources of barely-trained manpower to help with their mad plans. Many of the civilians are evacuating to the hills and forests outside of the city.



**GM Details:** It is important to note that the GM should account for the possibility that the players may not wish to get involved in a bloody, sharp, battle on a TL2 backwater. Under no circumstances should the players be forced to lead the defense of Opal. Damaging the party's starship might ground them in Opal and make them fight, but that smacks of very heavy GM railroading. No, instead, the players should want to defend a town of civilians in a neutral country from the ravages of war. If not, then the players have made a choice about the kind of characters they are running. If so, then they are putting their lives at risk to help others. Both choices have very meaningful in-game consequences.

That being said, the Maritime Union flotilla's mission is to completely obliterate Opal's port facilities, and severely damage the city. All this is part of a reprisal policy against privateer ships operating out of Ortik Island ports, like Opal. The operation is straightforward: the bombers will further destroy the city, then the marines will land, dynamite the port, destroy key infrastructure like hospitals and bridges, and then issue a simple warning upon departure. All told, about 150 marines will be landing, with support from a dozen light tanks that are loaded in the amphibious landers.

Opal is a large fishing port town of 25000 people. Of those, about 300 are ready and capable of defending their homes with a hodgepodge of civilian weapons. Another 1000 civilians are able to help in one way or another, but have no combat training whatsoever.

In order to organize and run the battle with the Maritime Union, the GM should develop a handful of locations on a map of Opal that represent important points to fight over: a hill overlooking the water, the downtown core, the port facilities, a hospital, the police headquarters, etc. Each location should have a note, explaining the reason why it is being targeted, the number and quality of the defenders available, the attacking force, and any other details the GM deems important.

The PCs will probably have their own means of transport—either a commandeered personal vehicle, or their starship—which will allow them a great deal of mobility on a TL2 battlefield. They should be able to intervene in any location they choose, or they might wish to split up the group and remain at specific locations. Overconfident players should be reminded that vehicle-mounted heavy weapons can damage starships. However, the presence of a TL4 vessel, even a Free Merchant rustbucket with a Sandthrower (read: gravitic rail gun) can easily tip the scales in favor of the defenders. Either way, the outcome of the battle will not be a foregone conclusion.

The Maritime Union flotilla is led by the MUS *Ali Pasha*, a typical TL2 cruiser, detailed on p. *XX*. Other vehicles include three commerce raiders, two transport ships, and amphibious landers, all detailed in the Yama entry on p. *XX*. The Maritime Union tanks and bombers are detailed below.

<b>Medium Bomber (TL2)</b>			
Speed	0	Km/h Travel	300km/h
Armor	8	Power	4/0
Hit Points	25	Mass	16/0
Crew	4	Hardpoints	2/0
Base Frame	Atmoflyer TL2		
Fittings	Cargo Bay: bombs 5d10 damage, to a 20m radius, save for half damage Hydrocarbon fueling: 8 hours Light Machine Gun: 2d8# in dorsal turret		

A big lumbering 3 engine bomber that the Maritime Union uses to terrorize its foes and attack strategic targets. The LMG in the dorsal turret is useful against other vehicles, but will not harm a starship.

<b>Light Tank (TL2)</b>			
Speed	1	Km/h Travel	50km/h
Armor	*	Power	8/
Hit Points	30	Mass	15/0
Crew	3	Hardpoints	4/0
Base Frame	Ground Truck TL3		
Fittings	Hydrocarbon Fueling: 5 hours Amphibious: for landing Heavy MG (coaxial): #3d6 Cannon: 3d10 (use rocket launcher stats)		

This is a small light tank that can be fitted aboard small transports for amphibious landings. It is used in urban combat primarily for infantry support, and should not go up against heavy armored vehicles. Tanks are not very effective in urban warfare, and require infantry to screen them as they rumble down the tight streets and alleyways of Opal.

### NPCs:

**Captain Shell Trevalian:** The commanding officer of the Opal Militia (43M). Captain Trevalian was assigned to this backwater by the Ortik Islands Federation military in the hopes that he would be able to provide some semblance of order to the privateering base that was growing up in and around Opal. Sadly, he has not been an inspiring leader, either among his troops, or the townsfolk in general. However, he is driven to action by the looming threat of invasion, and will fight to the bitter end to defend his home.

**Capt. Trevalian:** AC 11, HD: 2, AB: +2, Damage: 1d8\* SMG, Saves: 14, Movement: 10, ML: 10, Skills: Tactics+3, Lead +1, Talk +1

**Opal Militia Soldier:** AC 12, HD: 1, AB: +2, Damage: 1d8\* SMG, or 1d10+2 Rifle, 2d6 Grenade, Saves: 15, Movement: 10, ML: 9. Skills: Notice +1, Exert +1

**Mayor Hannah Oloon:** The elected civilian leader of Opal (61F). Mayor Oloon is competent, and knows when she is out of her depth. She has left fighting the Maritime Union to the professionals—and the PCs—and is instead helping the evacuation efforts. When the elderly and children are all on trucks, riding away into the forest and hills, she will consider her job done, and remain behind to help wherever she can.

**Volunteer from Opal:** AC 11, HD: 1, AB: +1, Damage: 1d6+1 pistol, or 1d8 revolver, or 1d10+2 rifle Saves: 15, Movement: 10, ML: 9, Skills: Exert +1

**Commander Rikard Umar:** MU Captain of the *Ali Pasha* (37M). Commander Umar is a young captain of such a large vessel, but he is a talented officer, and has political connections back home. Eager to make a name for himself, Umar has decided to mount a major reprisal raid against the town of Opal. He hopes to catch privateering ships in harbor, but will settle for destroying the port and much of the town. He is not bloodthirsty, and hopes that the residents have had time to evacuate.

**Maritime Union Marine:** AC 12, HD: 2, AB: +2, Damage: 1d8\* SMG, 2d6 grenade. Saves: 14, Movement: 10, ML: 10, Skills: Exert +2 Notice +1, Tactics +1

**Dr. Lido Jaraf:** Head of the trauma ward at the local hospital (42M). Dr. Jaraf is horrified by what is about to happen in Opal. He is a war veteran who retired from the Western League Navy, and moved to the safety of the Ortik Islands. He will drown his sorrows in the local moonshine once the battle is over, but until then, he knows that he will be performing triage on dozens, if not hundreds, of casualties. Dr. Jaraf would appreciate any aid the PCs can provide in the form of TL4 medical supplies.

**COMPLICATIONS:** What is a battle without chaos and complications?

1. **The attacking bombers have fighter escorts** from an undetected airship. These fighters are equipped with light autocannons, and so can seriously damage a starship.
2. Opal is being attacked because north of the town, the **Western League has built a radar station** to help its privateers find targets. While the town bears the brunt of the attack, a commando team equipped to TL4 standards (supplied by the KTL) will disable the station.
3. **Treachery!** One of the officers helping to defend Opal, Lt. Restis Naro (see p. 28), is broadcasting the PCs' plans to the Maritime Union flotilla!
4. The PCs have to **evacuate the wounded** from the hospital!
5. **A Western League submarine arrives**, and in the chaos of the fight, manages to torpedo the MUS *Ali Pasha*. Instead of surfacing to rescue sailors, it surfaces and begins machine-gunning them in the water. Will the PCs intervene?
6. **The demolition charges** the PCs planted to collapse buildings and block the advance of the tanks down the main street of Opal, **do not explode**. If someone does not volunteer to fix the detonator, the town will surely be overrun.



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