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## **Into The Crucible**



**Babylon 5 Created by J. Michael Straczynski**

# Into The Crucible

By  
Bruce Graw

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# Introduction

*Kosh:* They are alone. They are a dying people. We should let them pass.

*Sinclair:* Who, the Narn or the Centauri?

*Kosh:* Yes.

—‘Midnight on the Firing Line’

Welcome to *Into the Crucible*, a campaign setting for the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game*! This campaign is designed to operate throughout *Babylon 5*’s second season, covering events both large and small. As a storm gathers on the horizon, the people aboard the ‘last, best hope for peace’ struggle against all sorts of challenges. With this book, your players can take part in side scenarios tied into the individual episodes or major events leading to a final showdown aboard a doomed ship behind enemy lines.

Season Two of *Babylon 5* was dominated by what the Narn call the ‘War of Retribution’, which the rest of the galaxy knew simply as the Narn-Centauri War. This period often threw the station into chaos. Narn and Centauri agents were everywhere, spying on each other. Peace efforts were attempted, stalled and begun again. War material and refugees were funnelled through the station, sometimes leading to retaliation from the other side. Through it all, other beings were at work behind the scenes, watching and advising...and sometimes, when the moment was right, taking direct action.

This book is set amidst the events leading up to the Narn-Centauri War. The players, based on *Babylon 5*, will eventually find themselves involved in the war one way or another. Yet even as they make their way through the various scenarios presented herein, they will discover that they are not simply participating in a few unconnected missions. The events that occur take the form of a season-long story arc, culminating in a final battle deep within contested space. In the end, they learn that the Narn-Centauri War is not, in fact, the true conflict...the greatest threat is still to come.

## Preparation

To run this campaign, the Games Master must possess the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book* and *Core Rulebook I*. *The Earth Alliance Fact Book*, *The Minbari Federation Fact Book*, *The Coming of Shadows*, *Point of No Return* and *The Techno-Mages Fact Book* are also recommended. A thorough knowledge of the events that occurred in the *Babylon 5* show will also be quite helpful, although reminders will be placed throughout this text as necessary to link in with events on the show. Since the players will be operating ‘behind the scenes’ of the events depicted on television, this may not be as critical to them as it is to the Games Master.

Although this book is the second in a series of campaign products, following on the heels of *The Fiery Trial*, the players do not need to have played in that campaign to enjoy this one. If they have, they may recognise certain characters and events that are referenced elsewhere in this book. Some may seem like old friends. Others will be new to them. A group that didn’t play *The Fiery Trial* can still enjoy this campaign, as it is designed to stand alone.

Whenever a potential action the players might take will come into conflict with the main *Babylon 5* arc itself, a ‘**DANGER**’ notice will be given to that effect, along with suggestions for how it might be avoided. Note that this will only be of interest or concern if the Games Master is running a ‘canon campaign’ as defined in Chapter 9 of the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game*. In many cases, the players may not even be aware that they are affecting the core arc. The Games Master should take appropriate steps to ensure the integrity of *Babylon 5*’s storyline is not disrupted, though these alterations may not necessarily be visible to the players. When applicable, suggestions will be given for potential solutions, although the Games Master should feel free to create his own as necessary. However, simply saying ‘You can’t do that because it didn’t happen that way in the show!’ is not a viable option. Often the best solution is to avoid allowing the situation to occur in the first place and the key to that is preparation.

Text that appears in a shaded box within the course of a module is intended for the players. You can read this material aloud or paraphrase it as necessary. Sidebars contain privileged Games Master information, instructions, danger notices, alternative rules, optional encounters and the like. Information on encounters is provided directly within the module text, although significant Non-Player Characters and powerful enemies will be described more fully in the Appendices.

## Encounter Levels

This campaign is intended for a party of four to six 3<sup>rd</sup> level characters, which is approximately where a group that played *The Fiery Trial* will begin this campaign. If fewer players participate, the Games Master might wish to run an initial mini-scenario to provide them some additional experience. Some suggestions for starting activities are provided with the first module. Alternately the Games Master may simply provide the players with characters that begin at the required amount of experience, or simply adjust some of the encounters to fit the group as it currently stands.

In general, the completion of a module and all associated side scenarios will result in the acquisition of at most one level for each character. This in and of itself will not prepare them for the next module in the series. A suggested level will be provided for each module, and if the group has not yet achieved that much experience, the Games Master should strongly consider running a side scenario or two first. Some

suggestions for these alternatives will be provided as sidebars or, in some cases, several extra pages of text.

## Running the Campaign

This campaign may be viewed by some as just a series of modules laid end to end, but it is more than that. The events that happen in one module directly affect what happens in the next, and certain Non-Player Characters and other events may happen differently between scenarios depending on how, or if, the previous module was completed. While every effort has been taken to provide options that cover such situations, it is impossible to predict the actions of every single group of players, so sometimes the Games Master may need to make alterations to the events set forth in the text. Above all, be flexible. Changes can be made, but be aware of their effects on the overall arc. When the time comes to proceed to the final scenario, you do not want to find yourself unable to find a logical manner to get the players to that right place at the right time. Your players are going to know if your conclusion is too contrived and anything of that nature will spoil the grand finale.

### Running a Story Arc

The campaign is made up of several modules that together make up an entire story arc. The modules should be run in the order shown, as new things are learned in each module that build up to the story's ultimate conclusion. Be careful not to reveal more information than a given module specifies, or the discoveries that await the party in the next game will be spoiled. Players like to talk and guess and speculate amongst themselves, and listening to these comments and questions is part of the fun of being a Games Master. Just remember, confirm or deny nothing. Simply smile and nod and look mysterious. Pretend to be a Vorlon if you want to really enjoy yourself—answer questions in terse, obtuse, short sentences that mean nothing to anyone until after the fact. Examples of Vorlon-speak are scattered throughout this book and can be taken as hints or suggestions.

In this product, modules are presented as chapters. In between each one, you will find suggestions for events and activities that can occupy the players before the next part of the story arc unfolds. The Games Master can use these as desired, in whole or in part, or substitute activities of his own. A skilled Games Master might also be running an entirely separate story arc or two alongside *Into the Crucible*, as alluded to in Chapter 9 of the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game*. Since the characters will likely need to achieve another level of experience between modules, a secondary arc provides a perfect opportunity to do this.

Some Games Masters might wish to incorporate elements of a secondary or tertiary arc directly into the events of *Into the Crucible*. For example, a group that finds itself

operating as mercenaries or pirates might involve some or all of its members in side quests during trips to the various alien worlds explored herein. The ending scenario will then take on an even greater significance if the players have allied themselves with one side or the other. While no rules can be written specifically addressing such situations, we have attempted to provide hints and suggestions for additional scenario options whenever possible. Some of these will suggest additional story arcs in and of themselves.

### Module Handouts

At the end of this product, you will find several handouts provided for use by the Games Master during the course of the campaign. These include *Universe Today* clippings that will let the players know what is going on in the station, as well as various maps and other supplementary material.

The *Universe Today* pages are designed for use at the start of a given module. Present these to your players at the start of any play session where a module is scheduled to begin. Within the text of each module, suggestions are given for side scenarios that support the stories mentioned in the articles. The Games Master should feel free to modify these as needed or add his own. Not everything in the newspaper will result in a scenario, of course, and some scenarios (and much of the main story arc itself) will not be referenced in *Universe Today* at all. The Games Master can also create additional *Universe Today* pages as needed to cover any side scenarios of his own creation.

Note: If you don't want to tear the book apart to get the *Universe Today* pages and don't have access to a colour copier, you can download these handouts from the Mongoose web site, <http://www.mongoosepublishing.com>. Other support materials will also be available on this site from time to time, so check back often!

### Non-Player Characters and Alien Lifeforms

Generally, there are two types of enemies the players will encounter during play: Non-Player Characters and hostile alien creatures. On Babylon 5 and in other civilised areas, virtually every encounter will be with a Non-Player Character of some sort—including intelligent people who also happen to be aliens. Those modules set on other planets and the like could feature any number of bizarre monstrosities intent on killing and eating the players, and some of these will have even more fiendish ideas in mind.

Non-Player Character descriptions include the skills and abilities that are relevant to the encounter in question. For Non-Player Characters who appear only in a single encounter, no further details will be required. The Games Master may, however, occasionally need to give a Non-Player Character a more active role, depending on player actions. For example, a duty officer with whom the party must interact may be intended to appear only as a source of information, but if



the players somehow convince him to join their group for a time, further information might be needed. In these cases the Games Master should extrapolate likely skills and abilities for the Non-Player Character based on his or her profession and experience. Suggestions and hints on how to play such characters will also be provided as necessary.

Virtually every alien creature encountered by the players in this campaign will be of a type never before seen. To preserve the integrity of module text, the complete description of the alien beast will appear as a Xenobiology File sidebar. Individual statistics for the encounter itself will be placed within the encounter description.

### Difficulty Levels

There are no Difficulty Levels listed in this book. Instead, each module is designed to accommodate players of a specific level, as noted in the introductory text. Some players may find the encounters more or less difficult depending on their combination of classes, helpful Non-Player Characters and equipment. The Games Master may always adjust encounters by making slight modifications, such as the addition of skills or equipment if the party is having an easy time of things. Just remember that any added weapons or items will fall into the players' hands in the end!

### Experience Points and Mini-Scenarios

At the end of each module, a suggested number of experience points (XP) is provided. This is by no means a hard-and-fast, precise amount that must be given, although it is recommended that each character receive at least that much in order to advance towards the next module. The completion of certain tasks, rescuing of victims, discovery of hidden clues and other actions may also provide a party with bonus XP, as noted within the text. The Games Master can also provide other bonuses at his discretion, or reduce the amount if not all goals of the module are met. If the module is completely botched, few if any points should be awarded, and an additional side scenario may need to be run to make up the difference.

In certain instances, side plots are provided for specific individuals who match certain racial or social connection criteria. In these cases, XP awards apply only to that player. The Games Master should, however, ensure that all participants in the campaign undertake approximately the same number of such modules if they wish to do so. This avoids the appearance of favouritism, which can ruin the game for a disgruntled player. Suggestions for a few side modules are found throughout this book.

## The Story Arc

This campaign is designed to begin as a bridge between Season Two and Season Three of the series. A group that

has already been through Season One will probably already be aware that something important is building on the horizon and may well already be involved in these events. *Into the Crucible* puts them deeper into the coming conflict, but towards what end? The players may not even be aware that they are pawns being moved about on the galactic chessboard until late in the campaign, if at all. Even if they do, which side is manipulating them? Who can they really trust? What secrets are their allies keeping from them? These are the kinds of unanswered questions that will make a properly run *Babylon 5* campaign the stuff of legends.

### Module One: Any Sufficiently Advanced Technology

After a few events on Babylon 5—mini-scenarios that tie in with Season 2's early episodes—a gaunt, stony-faced woman named Theresa Cross approaches the players. Ms. Cross is actually an IPX agent, although she does not announce this right away. IPX is always interested in acquiring alien technologies and other scientific research materials, and to this end it employs a complex network of employees, assistants and unwitting dupes who do not realise they are even associated with such a huge company.

During the course of *The Fiery Trial*, an IPX agent named Roland Anderson employed the players and built them into a cohesive team capable of carrying out clandestine missions that could not be traced back to IPX. Sadly, a traitor killed him at the end of that campaign. If the players were part of those events, Theresa Cross will simply be his replacement. If they were not, she will recruit the group because of their reputation and abilities, as well as recommendations from sources she will not name.

Theresa has learned that a techno-mage left his staff somewhere on the station (just after the events of 'The Geometry of Shadows'). The staff is shot through with advanced technology that would mean a great deal to Ms. Cross's employers. Meanwhile the staff has been found by a petty crime lord in Downbelow who sets up an auction to sell it for a huge profit. The players must proceed to the auction and retrieve the staff if they can—but the staff's owner shows up looking for it! Will the players fight the powerful techno-mage or work alongside him? If they get the staff, what will they do with it? They could give it back, turn it over to Cross, sell it on the black market...or keep it themselves and try to figure out how it works, if they dare.

### Module Two: Dark Secrets

More side scenarios ensue, followed by the next module in the series. Theresa Cross returns, offering the players a mission of utmost importance. She believes that President Santiago did not die accidentally and can prove it, if only she can gain access to the wreckage of EarthForce One, which was scattered across the surface of Io after the ship exploded.

According to her, the government has deliberately ignored or hidden away pieces of the wreckage because those in power are involved in a huge conspiracy.

This leads the players to visit Io (as described in *The Earth Alliance Fact Book*) where they eventually track down the wreckage and escape after a confrontation with agents allied to President Clark. Will they turn the information over to Ms. Cross? Will they also pass it along to the station commander, or keep it to themselves? If they do hand it over, will anybody believe them? Will anyone *want* to believe them?

### Module Three: Requiem for the Dilgar

A mysterious man with no past or memories appears on the station. Theresa Cross asks the players to keep an eye on him and report anything unusual to her directly. Eventually it is learned that he is a Dilgar deep cover agent! The Dilgar race, supposedly destroyed years ago, was thought to be extinct with the passing of Deathwalker the previous year. Needless to say, the man's presence is an unwelcome surprise.

It turns out there is still a hidden Dilgar outpost out there in a secret location within League space, one that was cut off during the Dilgar War thirty years ago. Their agent claims they only want peace, so the players are sent to find out if these people have really changed or if something else is going on. Unfortunately they are followed by those who still seek to destroy all traces of the Dilgar race. Can the Dilgar earn the trust and aid of the players? Where will they go if they escape destruction at the hands of their enemies? Is their sudden reappearance a harbinger of something more sinister?

### Module Four: New Allies

Theresa Cross hooks the players up with a Narn who wishes to rescue his 'family'—actually a group of Ranger trainees—from a hidden outpost in Quadrant 14. He claims he has family members in a small underground colony not yet discovered by the Republic. Thanks to Theresa Cross, the Narn and his allies have in their possession a small Centauri ship and the secret codes needed to get them past the sentries. However, as the players move into the system a tremendous space battle erupts nearby. Their ship is called to help with the fighting, forcing them to travel to the colony in an ordinary shuttle, not even knowing if their transport back to Babylon 5 will be waiting for them when they finish their original mission.

Worse still, the colony is not exactly in good shape. An alien creature has broken into the tunnels through the geothermal vents, pitting the survivors against each other—and against the players. Can they defeat the beast, rescue the Rangers and escape Quadrant 14 with their lives?

## A Few Final Words Before Getting Underway

Within the synopsis above, it is assumed that the various party members all have some good reason to work together and have in fact been doing so for some time. A close-knit group is not required, but is highly recommended. A group with both Centauri and Narn members, for example, will have a tough time getting through Season Two without descending into civil war!

If the players have participated in *The Fiery Trial*, getting them involved in *Into the Crucible* is a simple matter. Roland Anderson's replacement, Theresa Cross, simply appears and announces that she is taking over his duties. On the other hand, if the group has not already been associated with IPX, she states that she has heard of the group's abilities and they meet her criteria for a special mission. She will also hint that she may have future work for them if they do well the first time. Considering the money she is offering, as well as the potential for further employment, she should not have too much trouble convincing a group to take on her tasks.

In *The Fiery Trial*, a great deal of effort was spent providing the means to get a group of players together to jump into the campaign. This time around it is assumed that the group already exists and its members have been associating with each other for at least several months, if not longer. If not, you should consider running a side module or two by way of introduction. Several suggestions are provided at the start of Module One.

So let's get started!



# Module One: Any Sufficiently Advanced Technology

I can only conclude that I'm paying off karma at a vastly accelerated rate.

—Susan Ivanova, 'Points of Departure'

*Roland Anderson was a fool.*

*He might've been brilliant, with a real plan for the future that could even have worked. He took this rag-tag group and moulded it into exactly what we needed, when we needed it. He planted the seeds, and the fruit is growing nicely indeed. But he was still a fool.*

*What could have possessed him to risk himself in such a manner? Why would he go to that dreary planet? Did he feel he couldn't trust his own followers? Or was he so starry-eyed with the possibility of ultimate success that he had to be there to see the results himself?*

*No matter. He still perished, and the tools he built are still in place. I will use them now, as he would have, but they won't know the truth. They won't know who I really am, or what I want from them. If they knew, they might not obey, and I need obedience above all. They can be left to think they have independence and a hand in their own destiny. They do not. They will serve, willingly or not. Yet they will not serve the masters Anderson trained them to serve. Instead, they will serve me.*

*Already the enemy is moving. They have agents everywhere, even in this place, this space station built on an ideal that I can appreciate even as I doubt its chances of survival. I must be careful. None must know my true nature. The day will come when the seeds planted by Roland Anderson germinate into weapons even he could never have expected. And I will be there to use those weapons.*

*I won't make the same mistake he did...*

## Background for the Games Master

### Module Summary

- ③ The players receive a visit from Theresa Cross and Alison Fernandez.
- ③ Cross sends the group on a treasure hunt for a lost techno-mage artefact.
- ③ The players discover the artefact (a staff) is in the hands of Frankie the Rat, a crime lord on Brown Seven.
- ③ Frankie tries to auction off the staff but is betrayed by Tolona, his second-in-command, who delivers a fake staff and moves to sell the real one to one of the other buyers.
- ③ Alwyn, a powerful techno-mage, appears and tries to recover the staff.
- ③ A four-way showdown occurs between the players, Alwyn, Tolona and the buyer.

### Names and Places of Importance

- ③ Theresa Cross: The players' new contact within IPX
- ③ Alison Fernandez: An old friend of the players from *The Fiery Trial*
- ③ Carvin: The dead female Centauri techno-mage who once owned the staff
- ③ Alwyn: Carvin's still-living master, who shows up looking for her staff
- ③ Brown Seven: Level of Downbelow where most techno-mages stayed while on Babylon 5
- ③ Frankie the Rat: Crime lord who controls Brown Seven
- ③ Kateen: Drazi aide of Frankie who watches over the Courtyard
- ③ Fat Robert: Kateen's aide and a powerful unarmed fighter
- ③ Kanim Hu: One of the bidders at the staff auction
- ③ Tolona: Centauri aide of Frankie's who betrays him to sell the staff on his own
- ③ Rory Garvan: Auction buyer who makes a secret deal to buy the staff directly from Tolona

Theresa Cross, IPX's replacement for Roland Anderson, has come to the station to rebuild her company's ties with the group Anderson set up during *The Fiery Trial*. She has brought with her one other character from that book, Alison Fernandez, who will initially meet with the group to renew their old acquaintance.

Note: If the players did not participate in *The Fiery Trial*, Alison will instead explain that she has been observing and investigating them and believes they will be interested in a

## Alison Fernandez

Alison has held many jobs in her life, but the one she is most fond of is her stint as an aide to Ambassador Sullivan of the Earth Alliance during the post-Minbari War reparation discussions. She discovered then that she had a real flair for diplomacy, but unfortunately in her early days she was not quite as good at it as she is now. In her attempts to please everyone she made a few enemies and one of these—she is not quite sure which, despite repeated attempts to find out—arranged to have her accused of taking bribes. IPX, however, saw her potential value and gave her a job on Babylon 5.

Alison is from Buenos Aires but speaks English like someone from the American Midwest. She also speaks Spanish fluently, though she considers it her second language. When she becomes highly emotional, or in the heat of passion, she will interject Spanish words or phrases into her speech patterns (e.g., *Madre de Dios!*).

Like other major Non-Player Characters, full statistics for Alison can be found in the Appendices at the end of this book.

business proposal. This, of course, was done at Theresa's insistence. In the event that Alison perished during the events of *The Fiery Trial*, use a different Non-Player Character with similar statistics.

IPX, which undertakes a variety of alien technology research efforts, has been aware of the race known as the Shadows for several years now. The experts at IPX do not know exactly what the Shadows are up to, but it cannot be good. IPX knows that the Shadows are ancient and very powerful, and their appearance could be a harbinger of doom for Earth and its neighbours. On the other hand, Shadow technology could be a powerful advantage if it could be located, studied and put to use within the Alliance. IPX has been actively hunting for such technology, which is why Roland Anderson helped train the players during *The Fiery Trial* and indeed the players were very helpful to his cause during that particular campaign. Theresa Cross has come to continue Anderson's work.

What no one but Theresa knows, however, is that she has her own agenda. Something is going on within the upper echelons of IPX and this has her quite worried. People she has known for years are being transferred or forcibly retired, to be replaced by individuals she knows are not qualified for the job. Furthermore, those who question these moves meet the same fate. Unwilling to take any risks for herself, she is playing the part of the model employee while she investigates further. None of this matters during Module One but it comes into play later in the campaign.

In the meantime, Theresa has come to the station because she has learned through her own sources that a techno-mage staff

was left behind somewhere on Babylon 5 after the events of 'The Geometry of Shadows'. This staff belonged to one of the mages, Carvin, who died unexpectedly at the end of that episode when she had to enter a decoy ship. That vessel was then destroyed by Shadow agents, leading the Shadows to believe their former thralls were now all dead (see *The Techno-Mages Fact Book* for complete details). The rest of the mages fled to a secret hiding place but Alwyn, Carvin's master, did not forget her sacrifice. It is believed that he is on his way back to the station to recover the lost staff and Theresa wants to acquire it first. If she can get her hands on it, she will deliver it to IPX for careful study. After all, the techno-mages were created by the Shadows, so any insight on their derivative technology could be useful. Of course, she will first take a look at the staff herself, just to make sure it is not dangerous.

Naturally, Theresa cannot search the station herself, so she brings in Alison Fernandez and hires the group to look for her. Meanwhile, she remains in her cabin, available for further questioning by the players if the need arises.

## Additional Module Information

This module, like most of those in this book, can be played as a standalone scenario. However, it is best used as part of the ongoing story arc that unfolds throughout these pages. The module is an introductory one with a variety of options that can carry the tale in many directions over several weeks of game time. While many of the remaining modules that comprise *Into the Crucible* have carefully scripted timelines, that is not the case here. Indeed, the Games Master can choose to bring in Theresa Cross at virtually any time, either immediately (if he wants to get right down to business) or



after a few short scenarios intended to introduce players to the game. Some suggestions for possibilities are provided hereafter.

Throughout this book, it is assumed that the players have some sort of regular meeting place on Babylon 5, or another area they frequent regularly. In *The Fiery Trial*, this was the Nova Nine Pub, a faithful rendition of an actual British pub located in the Zocalo. Box text and other background material in this book will refer to the Nova Nine as the standard meeting spot for the players. If they have some other headquarters, replace that location in the text as necessary.

### Suggested Level for This Module: 4-6 3<sup>rd</sup> level characters

## Before the Module

If the players have just concluded *The Fiery Trial* or another scenario that occurs near the end of Season One, they may need a bridge to this module. After all, immediately jumping from one major event into another may seem too sudden. A short side scenario or two will be just what the doctor ordered.

The short scenarios hereafter, like others in this book, not only fill this niche but also link to the episodes of Season Two. Depending on the depth of the campaign, the Games Master can run any or all of them before proceeding with Encounter One for 'Any Sufficiently Advanced Technology'.

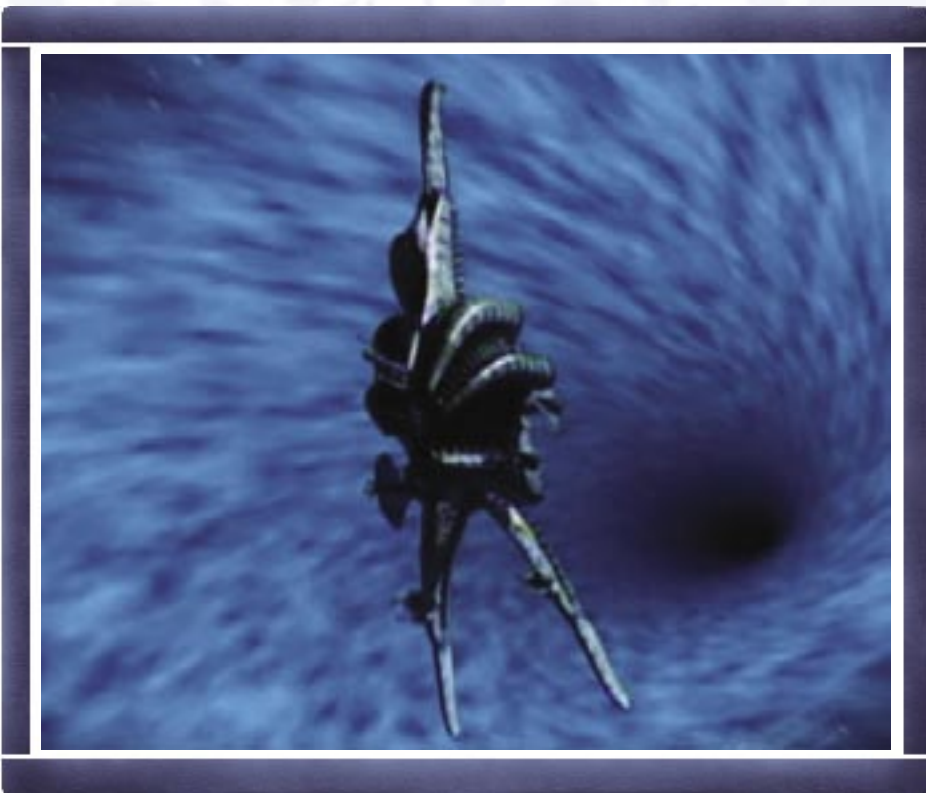
### Link #1 to 'Points of Departure'

In this episode, the rogue Minbari cruiser *Trigati* appears at Babylon 5. The cruiser's arrival coincides with the assignment of John Sheridan as commander of the station. The commander and crew of the *Trigati* refused to follow the Grey Council's order to surrender at the conclusion of the Earth-Minbari War, and instead mutinied and vanished. Now they have returned, intending to regain their honour at any cost. During the events that follow, the *Trigati*'s commander kills himself and the ship attempts to provoke a military battle in the hopes of blaming the

hated Sheridan 'Star-Killer' for renewed hostilities. When the ruse fails, the *Trigati* and all its fighters self-destruct.

What nobody knows is that the commander of the *Trigati*, Kalain, was not the only member of that ship's crew to come to Babylon 5. Not every *Trigati* crewman saw the wisdom of perishing without striking a single blow against the hated enemy. Keeping his true goals secret even from Kalain, a Minbari assassin named Manai accompanied his commander to the station, posing as his shuttle pilot. Now, seeing the failure of Kalain's foolhardy mission, he intends to carry out a secondary goal—that of slaying Commander Sheridan!

After the destruction of the *Trigati*, the shuttle that brought him to Babylon 5 is identified and discovered to be empty. Naturally the vessel is considered Minbari property, so the Minbari are asked to claim it. Any Minbari players who are part of the ambassadorial corps could be assigned to check the ship out. A player associated with Station Security could also be sent to participate in this examination. During the investigation, an examination of the shuttle's automatic logs reveals, on a successful Computer Use check (DC 15), that two people were aboard the vessel. Players who cannot read Minbari suffer a -5 penalty to this check. The names of the passengers are not available in the logs, although it is obvious that one of them was Kalain. So who was the other one? No Minbari deaths, other than Kalain's, have been reported



aboard the station since the *Trigati* incident. What happened to the pilot?

The next logical step is to check the video logs of the shuttle bay, as well as the customs records of individuals entering Babylon 5 through that port. The image will not be of much help (at first), and the Minbari gave the false name 'Litoin' at the entry station. He arrived carrying a bag identified as a Minbari diplomatic pouch and was permitted entry without search. Since his arrival, nothing has been seen of him and no one by that name has arranged for quarters or made any purchases.

If the players have not already become involved, this information is enough to cause Security some alarm. Security does not trust the Minbari, who are obviously keeping secrets and have a known grudge against Sheridan. Upon learning that one of the *Trigati*'s crew is unaccounted for they launch a search for the missing 'Litoin.' Assuming the players have any connections at all with Security, they will be asked to help look for him. A human or Minbari player is ideal for this role but not necessary.

Note: Mr. Garibaldi is unavailable during this scenario due to his injury at the end of Season One. Players interfacing with Security deal with either Garibaldi's aide or Zack Allen. Delenn is also unavailable at present as she is still entrapped within her chrysalis.

At Security's direction the players are given access to the security logs and an image of Manai from the cameras. Unless the players are high-level Minbari, they will not have any reason to recognise him. However, if they think to show the image to the Minbari ambassadorial staff, Hedronn will be able to positively identify Manai. If the players are not Minbari they will need to make a Diplomacy check (DC 16) to actually confer with Hedronn. Otherwise they are forced to deal with Trenav, a low-level Minbari who does not have

time to trifle with such unimportant matters. Trenav will stall and stymie all attempts to bypass him unless the players pull rank or get Garibaldi's aide or Zack Allen directly involved—and neither of them will be too happy about this interruption of their regular duties.

If the players do not go directly to the Minbari to ask for identification, or have trouble with Trenav, they can use a diplomatic contact to identify Manai. The contact must have some way to access Minbari personnel files. Manai's status as an assassin cannot be learned directly in this manner unless the diplomatic contact is himself connected with Minbari assassins in some way. Manai is listed in the *Trigati*'s crew manifest as a 'special operations specialist', but no other information can be located—which in and of itself will be curious.

If the name 'Manai' is spoken in the presence of Lennier or Hedronn they will immediately identify him as a known assassin. If the players report the fact that the man arrived on Babylon 5 under an assumed name or that he was a 'special operations specialist' to Security, Zack Allen will drop the name to one of those two Minbari and thus learn the truth. Should Allen or anyone else in Security discover that the assassin is loose, he will immediately discern that Sheridan is the likely target and set up an ambush for Manai. He orders everyone involved to keep quiet about the fact that Manai has been identified and arranges a public appearance by Sheridan at the Zen Garden in the hopes of drawing out the assassin. The players are asked to lurk in the area as backup for Security.

Sheridan wears a flak jacket under his uniform but otherwise trusts his Security men (most of whom are in plainclothes) to keep him safe. Sharpshooters and observers cover the area and scanning teams keep an eye out for weapon signatures. However, when Manai entered the station he carried a 'diplomatic pouch' containing a holdout fusion rifle (see sidebar). He now seeks to slay Sheridan from a distance using this weapon.

Since he is an excellent assassin, Manai scouts the area in advance and discovers a spot along the outer edge of the Zen Garden where he cannot be seen by security. Since he does not care about surviving his attack on Sheridan, he does not bother to set up an escape route. The chances of the players spotting him depend entirely on their actions during the preparation for Sheridan's speech, which will be given to a group of 'schoolteachers'. Depending on their nature, the players could volunteer to play the parts of these teachers or they might be in the audience, or reporters, or any other position they feel is appropriate.

**Minbari Holdout Fusion Rifle:** This item is similar to a Sha'nar fusion rifle (see *The Minbari Federation Fact Book*) but is designed for use by assassins. Like the Sha'nar, it can be broken down for easy transport within a briefcase or diplomatic bag and cannot be identified by scanners in this state. The small power cell provides enough energy for three normal shots or one rapid-fire shot. Installing a new power cell is a standard action. The holdout rifle otherwise possesses the stats of a Sha'nar fusion rifle except it costs 750 credits more and weighs only four pounds. Possession of one aboard Babylon 5 is illegal and the weapon is normally only available as an extremely rare item on the black market or to Minbari assassins or snipers.



## Manai

9<sup>th</sup> Level Minbari Agent

**Hit Points:** 24

**Initiative:** +4 (+4 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 20 (+10 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +6/+1 melee or +10/+5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Security Systems, Sneak Attack +2d6, Skill Mastery (Hide, Move Silently)

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 11, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 12

**Skills:** Balance +16, Bluff +13, Concentration +13, Escape Artist +16, Hide +16, Move Silently +16, Pilot +16, Spot +13

**Feats:** Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (fusion rifle)

**Equipment:** Holdout fusion rifle with 2 power packs, fighting knife, identicard with false Litoi persona (forged by someone with a Forgery roll of 25)

Manai is a fanatical assassin bent on making John Sheridan pay for his 'crime' against the Minbari warrior caste during the Earth-Minbari War. His desperation has made him blind to the possibility that Sheridan's public relations event could be a trap.

The speech is given to a group of six 'teachers' being recognised for their skilled work with children on the station. Ostensibly it is also a chance for Sheridan to show his humanitarian side—this is his first real opportunity to appear to the rest of the station in a non-military aspect since his arrival on Babylon 5. Thus there are several reporters in the area, as well as Zack Allen—because if someone high up in Security did not show up the assassin would surely be suspicious of a trap. Four other Security troops in plainclothes are also present as a small 'audience'. The players can take the place of any of these or come up with another plan of their choosing.

At some point during the speech Manai will make his move, emerging from cover to take aim at Sheridan. Prior to this, the players can only discover his presence with a Search check opposed by Manai's formidable Hide skill—note that he has Skill Mastery with this skill, so he can take 10 if he wishes. Should they notice him early, hiding within the bushes along the edge of the Zen Gardens, they can expose the attempt right away. However, in his anger, Manai will then duel with the players directly and he can be a deadly foe.

Should this not come to pass, Manai will wait with extreme patience until the moment is right, whereupon he steps

out of the bushes and moves into position. Regardless of where they are, the players receive a Spot check (DC 25) to notice him as he first begins to move and a second Spot check (DC 15) to see him as he gets into the right location for the perfect shot. A player can also become aware of him on either occasion with a Listen check opposed by Manai's Move Silently check. Again, note that he has Skill Mastery in this skill.

**DANGER:** *If the players do not act quickly to halt the assassin, damage from Manai's attack could seriously injure or even kill Captain Sheridan!*

Anyone who makes the first Spot or Listen check receives a surprise action—only actual players have this opportunity, not any Non-Player Character guards. Manai's action in the second round, while the players have the DC 15 Spot chance, is to take aim at Sheridan. Again, only the players have a chance to do something to stop him—draw a weapon, attack, yell out a warning or whatever. If they do not warn Sheridan, Manai will take an aimed shot with a +2d6 sneak attack bonus—potentially enough to kill the Commander in a single blast!

Manai ignores anything the players do and fires on Sheridan after one round of aiming. If they cry out a warning, he fires without aiming, fearing the target will duck out of sight behind the podium where the speech is taking place. If he hits Sheridan, Manai moves forward to assure himself of the kill with a *coup de grace*, after which he kills himself with his fighting knife. If he misses, Manai takes any action he can to get another shot, including ignoring all guards and giving up whatever attacks of opportunity his motion provokes. Only if he has no way to attack Sheridan will he engage the players or any other guards. If desired, the Games Master may rule that on the second round after taking his shot (if any), Sheridan drops to the ground to be covered by Zack Allen, and the other guards in the area mow Manai down.

If the Games Master wishes to prolong this encounter or set Manai up as a potential recurring enemy, there are several potential outcomes that do not involve his death. Although he has no escape route planned, he may still attempt to flee if the opportunity presents itself and the hated Sheridan has not been killed. He also has a high Escape Artist skill and might free himself from manacles or from prison. A Minbari sympathiser might also let him out of the brig, or he might escape after being handed over to the Minbari for prosecution. The Games Master might also have him take 'poison' that does not actually kill him but only fakes his death for a short period.

Suggested experience for this scenario: 300 (150 if Sheridan is critically wounded or Manai escapes)

## Link #2 to 'Points of Departure'

The destruction of the *Trigati* left thousands of kilos of debris floating in space near Babylon 5, including the wreckage of two dozen imploded Nial-class fighters. Naturally all that debris presents a hazard to navigation, so the new station commander orders it cleaned up as quickly as possible before some hapless freighter winds up holed by a floating chunk of metal. He also takes steps to ensure all reasonably intact pieces are collected for return to the Minbari.

A Sharlin cruiser normally carries a complement of 24 such fighters, as well as two spares that normally do not take flight in combat operations. When parts of a 25<sup>th</sup> fighter are recovered from the wreckage, station records reveal that 26 Nials were actually in space during the attempted 'attack' by the *Trigati*. So what happened to that last fighter?

This scenario can be played from several points of view, depending on player classes and alignments. If the players are affiliated with Security or EarthForce, they will be sent on an official mission to locate and recover the missing fighter. If they have any connections with the Minbari, they will be asked to recover the fighter for the honour of the Federation. They could also have an affiliation with another race, who will want to 'acquire' the Nial in order to study its advanced technology. Finally, criminal elements will want to get their hands on the fighter so they can sell the thing for a huge windfall. Official missions will not result in pay, but will increase the group's prestige. Unofficial ones offer up to 5,000 credits for the successful (and secret) delivery of a useful piece of Minbari technology.

Regardless of the means, the players will need to first examine the detailed records of the 'battle' that resulted in the *Trigati* complement's mass suicide. If the players are working through legal channels, getting a look at the recordings and scans is no trouble at all. If not, they need to make a Computer Use check (DC 15) to find enough publicly available scans to locate the required information.

The scans show that 25 of the fighters in the 'battle' exploded into tiny bits, but the missing one split in two. The first part, which contained the cockpit and top section with all the electronics, was recovered. The second half, made up of nearly all the fighter's propulsion and weapon systems, sailed off into space and was captured by Epsilon 3's gravity. Depending on how the players acquired the information about the missing fighter, they will need to come up with some way to calculate its trajectory and locate the wreckage. There are several potential methods, all requiring a skill check (DC 20). These include Knowledge (astrophysics), Technical (space travel), or even Computer Use if the player wishes to write a program to make the proper calculations.



The Nial wreckage, it appears, crashed on the opposite side of Epsilon 3. Landing on the planet is prohibited to civilians (cf. 'A Voice in the Wilderness') so the players will need official permission to descend. If they are working for the station or the Minbari, this will not be a problem. Otherwise, they will need a Diplomacy or Forgery check (DC 20) and a convincing story. For example, if working for the Centauri, they might explain that a missing Centauri shuttle was located on the planet, but Ambassador Mollari does not want to involve an official rescue crew for 'diplomatic reasons'.

The next challenge will be to get to the crashed Minbari fighter. Most groups will not have their own ship, so they will need to acquire one. Let them get creative. A group that lacks sanction by the Earth Alliance or the Minbari will need to rent a shuttle willing to risk the descent to Epsilon 3 and avoid capture by authorities. The shuttle must be of a size large enough to accommodate two-thirds of a Nial fighter. If they do not have their own pilot, whoever flies the shuttle must be trustworthy enough to keep quiet about what is found—or they will have to be bribed.

If the players are in fact working for the station with the intent to return the wreckage to the Minbari after recovery, a 'businessman' named Hans Kato approaches them just before they set off for the planet. He explains that he knows their mission and offers 10,000 credits if they deliver the wreckage to him instead of station personnel. He does not identify himself or who he works for, but if the players succeed in a Bluff or Intimidate check (DC 15), he will reveal that he secretly works for EarthForce and wants to retrieve the wreckage for the Alliance, rather than turn it back over to the Minbari. A Sense Motive check (DC 15) reveals that Hans is still not telling everything.



Accessing his computer file with a Computer Use check (DC 10) reveals that he is indeed an EarthForce operative, but if that same check also exceeds DC 18, the investigating player discovers there is additional information available in a sealed file. Breaking into this file requires a Computer Use check (DC 25) and reveals that he is actually an undercover operative for Station Security—obviously a plant to test the players' loyalties. This information can also be discerned through telepathy, as Hans has no way to block or detect scans.

If the players report his activities like good, responsible citizens, Security personnel will trust them implicitly thereafter. If they try to take him at his word and score the big payoff, Station Security will arrest him in a 'sting' operation and thank the players for catching this 'criminal' in the act. They will not be charged with a crime, but will not receive any reward and will thereafter be distrusted by all Babylon 5 authorities (–2 reputation penalty to all related skill checks).

Eventually the players will set off to try recovering the fighter. They are not the only ones looking for it, though. After they land and start loading the fighter aboard their ship (an operation that takes place on a rocky planetary surface with no atmosphere and normal gravity), two other vessels show up. One is a standard Earth transport shuttle flown by smugglers looking for a salvage opportunity, while the other is a Narn shuttle hoping to grab some technology they can reverse-engineer. If the players are already occupying one of these roles, replace that one with a group of EarthForce personnel looking to secretly nab the tech for the Alliance.

The two shuttles approach and their pilots start threatening the players and each other, trying to secure the rights to the Nial for themselves. The smuggler pilot is named Lance Jorgensen, while the Centauri pilot is 'Lord' Tranzig—regardless of Knowledge checks, no player will recognise the name. First the two shuttle captains promise to open fire if the players do not stop loading the wreckage onto their ship. If this bluff is called (neither shuttle is armed), they start bidding on the Nial, offering up to 50,000 credits for salvage rights. Should the players accept an offer from one shuttle, the other immediately swears to oppose the other at all costs.

While they argue, the players should have enough time to finish loading the wreckage and take off. If they do not, they can buy more time with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 16) to stall the shuttle pilots. Distress calls will go unheeded as the body of the planet blocks signals to Babylon 5. The players can also try creative solutions like threatening to blow up the Nial if the shuttles approach too closely or firing on them with hand weapons. Eventually, though, the players

will need to take off. When they do, the other shuttles begin an aerial duel, trying to ram the players and knock them back to the ground.

Of course, if the players' ship is armed, they can solve the whole issue by simply firing warning shots at the opposing vessels. Doing so scares them off at once. Otherwise the players will need to fly their ship in an evasion pattern and avoid ramming attempts. Fortunately the two opposing shuttles are flown by fairly inexperienced pilots (Pilot bonus +8). Also, they are afraid to fully commit to a collision for fear of giving their rival the upper hand. If one of them eventually does hit the players' shuttle, the other crashes into the first, causing both to spiral out of control and let the players escape.

It is possible that the players could wind up crashing on Epsilon 3 as a result of damage to their shuttle. If this occurs, they need to survive for six hours until the planet's rotation puts them in position to radio Babylon 5 for rescue. Surviving smugglers and/or Centauri will attempt to land and seize the Nial for themselves during this period. If the players resist, the enemy will storm the crashed shuttle but they do not expect a fight and can be beaten off easily. Actually, their approach will mostly be bluster intent on bluffing the players into capitulating. If the players do surrender without fighting, they will be allowed to live, but the Nial will be captured and taken by the victors.

Suggested experience for this scenario:

Retrieving the Nial and returning it to the Minbari: 300

Retrieving it but selling it for a profit: 100

Losing the Nial to the smugglers or Centauri: 100

Note that if the Nial is in fact stolen by someone else, the Games Master could extend this mini-scenario by having the Minbari hire them to hunt it down before it falls into the wrong hands.

### Link to 'The Geometry of Shadows'

In addition to providing a brief side scenario, this also helps introduce players to *The Techno-Mages Fact Book*. Using this link makes the players somewhat accustomed to the techno-mages, making the rest of the coming module less of a shock and also gives them additional experience with the mysterious mages that helps explain why Theresa Cross wants the players' help in dealing with a related matter.

This side scenario begins just after the techno-mages depart the station. Security discovers a badly burned body in Downbelow and then another appears shortly thereafter. The players are asked to help with the investigation, primarily because Security forces are not exactly welcomed down there with open arms. Witnesses are not talking and in fact seem to be afraid for some reason.

## Makeshift Flamethrower

This is a cobbled-together device consisting of a tank of chemicals worn under the robes and a cutting torch attached to the underside of the arm. When Riley points his right hand at a target and toggles the controls on his belt with the left hand, a gout of liquid shoots out and is ignited by the cutter. Because this action is so swift, the viewer must make a Spot check (DC 18) to notice the left hand doing something while the right produces the 'fireball'. Needless to say, Riley needs both hands free to employ the device. The weapon has enough fuel to produce 10 shots (and since he has already used it on his most recent victim, he only has 9 left).

The jet of burning liquid sprays out to 40 feet in one direction (a line, not a cone). Riley makes a ranged touch attack on his intended target, and if he hits they suffer 2d6 fire damage and must make a Reflex save (DC 14) or catch on fire. Anyone within the line between Riley and the target (including the target if the initial attack missed) must make a Reflex save (DC 14) or catch on fire. The flamethrower can penetrate cover, but cover provides a bonus to the save DC equal to the cover DV bonus (see page 59 of the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game*).

If desired, Riley can employ the flamethrower in a spray attack instead of at a specific target. If he does this, he covers a cone-shaped area extending out to 30 feet. Anyone in this area must make a Reflex save (DC 14) or catch on fire. Making a spray attack uses the equivalent of two rounds of ammunition.

If the flamethrower is used on more than one successive round it automatically explodes, scoring 3d6 fire damage on the owner and automatically setting him on fire. Anyone within ten feet of the explosion must make a Reflex save (DC 14) or catch on fire. If the flamethrower is used more than once in any one-minute period, roll 1d6 for each attempt after the second. A roll of 1 indicates a similar explosion occurs. The weapon is crude and must be allowed to cool between uses, or a catastrophe will result.

Anyone who catches on fire because of the flamethrower suffers 1d6+1 fire damage per round until the flames are extinguished. Hopefully, because the players are aware that a 'techno-mage' with 'fire spells' is about, they will think to bring along an extinguisher or two.

The players will need to spend some time wandering around on the various decks of Brown Sector—this could theoretically bring them into contact with Frankie the Rat's goons on Brown Seven (see the main module text hereafter), but only in a passing manner. They will need to make a Gather Information check (DC 15) to acquire anything useful. Succeeding a DC 15 check reveals that most residents of Downbelow believe the murders were committed by a techno-mage who stayed on the station after the others left. If the Gather Information check equals or exceeds DC 20, they learn that the techno-mage in question is supposedly insane and kills anyone who does not do exactly what he tells them to do. This information can then be traced back to a lurker named Ethan Macaulay who is frequently seen getting drunk at the Happy Daze.

If interviewed in a drunken state, Ethan is too wasted to give much information other than to say he saw his friend Colin burned to death by 'that damned techno-wizard.' If allowed to sober up, he explains that he and Colin were 'hanging out' (actually, they were looking for someone to rob) when a man in grey robes 'attacked Colin for no reason' (they tried to beat him up and steal his money). The man revealed himself

to be a techno-mage when he 'pointed his hand at my best friend in the world and fried him to a crisp.' Ethan then fled while the 'wizard' swore to kill any man on the station who refused to acknowledge him as a god.





## Riley P. Tracey

5<sup>th</sup> Level Human Lurker

**Hit Points:** 17

**Initiative:** +6 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 13 (+3 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +2 melee or +5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Survivor's Luck

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +3, Will -1

**Abilities:** Str 8, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 7, Cha 11

**Skills:** Bluff +8, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Pick Pocket +10, Sense Motive +6

**Feats:** Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Run

**Equipment:** Makeshift flamethrower, crude knife, 15 credit chits (stolen from previous victims)

Riley is a crazed lurker who now fancies himself a techno-mage and therefore worthy of being worshipped as a 'god'. Anyone who doubts him is burned to death and his possessions stolen. He appears as a human in grey robes with a shaved head and, if not laughing maniacally, conducts himself in a calm, wizard-like manner. If allowed to roam unchallenged, he will eventually collect a small army of followers and become a threat to the other citizens of Downbelow.

Actually, the 'techno-mage' is one Riley P. Tracey, a lurker whose mind has started to crack after over a year scraping out a desperate existence in Downbelow. When the techno-mages arrived, he was fascinated by their appearance and self-confidence. He attempted to talk to them several times and was rebuffed, until finally one was forced to drive him away with a fiery show of force. This snapped something in Riley's head. He spent several days constructing a makeshift flamethrower that sprays a flammable chemical on a target and ignites it using a portable cutting torch. When he flings forth his hand, splashing the target with this liquid and setting it afire, he utters some nonsense gibberish that makes any observers believe he is casting a 'spell'.

The only clues the players have to this deception can be found on the bodies of the dead lurkers. First, they were both robbed of anything of value, suggesting that the killer hung around long enough to take whatever survived the fire. What does a techno-mage need with money and makeshift weapons? Second, anyone with the proper skill can make a Medical check (DC 20) to identify the residue of the chemical accelerant Riley used to burn his victims—traces

of which can also be located at the crime scenes. Why would a techno-mage, master of highly advanced technology, use a common chemical? Clearly this is not the work of a renegade mage.

In any event, while the players are investigating, word comes in that someone has been set afire elsewhere on the same Brown Sector level where they happen to be at the moment. If the players hurry to the scene, they find Riley laughing and shouting out commands over his latest victim. As soon as he sees the players, he demands they bow down before him or suffer a similar fate. If they refuse, he attacks with his 'flamethrower' (see sidebar). As long as he is not badly threatened, he keeps using it until it malfunctions, exploding and turning him into a human torch.

If the players have already identified Riley as a lurker instead of a techno-mage, they can attempt to talk to him before he attacks. If they succeed in an opposed Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidate check, they confuse him for one round before he goes totally nuts and starts burning everyone in sight.

After he takes any damage in combat, Riley attempts to retreat, using his Run feat to best effect. Players who pursue are attacked with the flamethrower. If Riley gets away, the next time he is seen it will be with two 'converts' (2<sup>nd</sup> level lurkers who have agreed to accept him as a 'deity'). After that, he slowly gathers a larger and larger army with the intent of taking over all of Downbelow. This could lead to further scenarios as his cult develops. Note that he will make improvements to the flamethrower in this period so it will not explode during future encounters. Also, he will eventually get his hands on a set of padded armour in the interim, making him a much more challenging encounter.

Suggested experience for this scenario: 200 (bonus 100 if Riley is kept alive)

## Encounter One: The Meeting

*You are sitting in the Nova Nine Pub enjoying a cold one and watching a darts tournament take place nearby. The place is packed, since it is Saturday night and the afternoon work shift ended half an hour ago.*

*As you toss back another drink and trade observations about the darts game with your friends, a familiar face enters. It is Alison Fernandez! You have not seen her in months, since that incident on P'Lask that resulted in the death of her employer. Standing behind her is a thin, gaunt woman in a black overcoat. Her short hair is brown and styled very*

plainly. *She looks like someone who does not want to be noticed in a crowd.*

*As you all stand up to greet Alison, she shakes your hands warmly. 'Hello, everybody,' she says in that welcome Spanish accent. 'Nice to see you all again. Let me introduce my new supervisor, Theresa Cross.'*

At first the conversation involves introductions and small talk. Let the players introduce themselves to Theresa, who will politely not let on that she is intimately familiar with all their dossiers. She explains that she is Roland Anderson's successor but she will not discuss her employers or what her actual job is.

Note: It is possible that the players learned in *The Fiery Trial* that Anderson was working for IPX. If they did, it is likely that they never let on, and if not, Theresa will not be aware of their knowledge. Should the players confront Theresa by asking if she is an IPX employee, she will deny it, even if the players insist they know Anderson was a lackey of IPX.

The players will also probably want to know what Alison has been up to for the last couple of months. She has been on Earth trying to track down who betrayed her when she was in the Diplomatic Corps. Sadly, she made no progress despite several promising leads. Every time she thought she might pin down something useful, the information she needed was missing from a database or had been destroyed in some freak accident. She is now resigned to the fact that she will probably never know who set her up for a fall.

Finally Theresa gets down to business.

*Theresa turns to you and her mouth turns up in a smile. 'As you know from the actions of my predecessor,' she explains in an even, businesslike tone, 'our mutual employer is interested in acquiring all sorts of rare goods and technology. That's why we arranged for scientific expeditions like those you helped us with last year. Now, we have a chance to acquire a very rare—indeed, a unique—artefact unlike anything we've ever seen. I assume you know what a techno-mage is?'*

At this point, let the players either agree or profess ignorance. If they say they do not know, Theresa gives them a brief tutorial.

*Theresa nods at your response. 'Anyway, as I'm sure you're aware, a short while ago Babylon 5 was literally invaded by techno-mages. During their visit, they generally stayed out of sight as much as possible. When they left, their transport was destroyed by sabotage, so that it seemed the mages were all dead. We thought all their technology went with them, but we've since learned through our own sources that one of*

## Theresa Cross

Like Roland Anderson, Theresa's name is a pseudonym. Her real name is buried in her past, along with whatever background she had before joining IPX. She might as well have died at the end of that previous life, to be reincarnated fully grown as Theresa Cross.

As the description above suggests, Theresa dresses plainly and tries very hard not to be noticed. She wears dark, uninteresting clothing and speaks without any recognisable accent. A Listen check (DC 20) will note that she occasionally slips briefly into one accent and then another and another, as if unable to decide what country she is actually from. Whether this is by accident or design cannot be determined.

Theresa is a thin rail of a woman who only weighs about 100 pounds. She prefers heavy coats or outfits with shoulder padding to suggest she is not so frail. She rarely smiles and tends to speak in a cool, businesslike manner. If anyone makes a joke she laughs along with the others, but it is a clipped, harsh sound that is clearly forced. Humour, it seems, is not an important part of her life. The only time she shows any true emotion is when describing a potential job or trying to convince others to do what she needs them to do. Then she becomes animated, appealing to them in whatever way she must to get them to accept the task she sets before them.

*them left a staff behind, hidden somewhere on Babylon 5. We need you to find it.'*

At this point the players will probably have a few questions. Some of Theresa's potential responses:

**'Why don't you look for it yourself?'** 'Oh, I could, but this is actually only the second time I've been on Babylon 5. The last time, I was just waiting to transfer to a new ship and was only here a couple of hours. I really need somebody who knows the place and knows how to get around.'

**'How do you know about the staff?'** 'Oh, I have my ways. Do a favour here, pass along some information there and people do the same for you. I won't bore you with the details.'

**'Any idea where to start looking?'** 'All I know for sure is that the techno-mages were mostly staying on Brown Seven. Some had quarters of their own, of course, like their leader,



but the majority were residing in a small community area. You might ask around down there.'

**'Why do you need the staff?'** 'Techno-mages, as you know, have technology so advanced it appears to be magic. This technology is all through their bodies and in some of the devices they carry. No one has ever been able to find a dead techno-mage, so the only thing we really know about what they do comes from the few artefacts that have been located over the years. Those have all been small things, though—micro-cameras, jewellery, items like that. A staff would be the find of the century—the Holy Grail of research opportunities, if you will.'

**'Why don't we just keep the staff and sell it to the highest bidder?'** 'Oh, yes, you could do that, I'm sure, but then you wouldn't get any future work from me. Also, I think you'd find an announcement of that sort would attract the attention of some very powerful people—people who wouldn't bother to wait for your little auction to finish. They'd either steal it from you, or just kill you and take it from your bodies. I, on the other hand, offer an easy, painless solution. Plus you can be sure the staff won't fall into the hands of the wrong sort of people.'

**'How much will you pay us for the staff?'** 'I'm willing to give your group five thousand credits for the safe return of the item.' She is willing to go as high as 10,000 credits—a princely sum! The players will have to win a couple of contested Diplomacy checks to manage that feat, however. She will not budge if they attempt Bluff or Intimidation rolls, as she knows she holds the high ground here. Whatever the settled price, she will not offer any up front – as far as she is concerned, the entire sum is payable only on her receipt of the staff.

**'Does anyone else know about the staff?'** 'Sadly, the information that came to me about the staff was not exclusive. I'm sure others are aware of it and may already be searching for the artefact. You should begin your hunt with all due haste.'

**'Can we involve anyone else in the search? Station Security, for example?'** 'I'd rather you didn't. The more groups that get involved, the better the likelihood that one of them will claim the staff as their own upon its recovery. Best to just keep quiet about it. You probably don't want to mention to anyone what it is you're looking for.'

**'Do you know what this thing looks like?'** 'Certainly. It's a five-foot walking stick made of a striated black wood, similar to obsidian but much harder. At the top, the wood extends out in four directions to surround a faceted crystal as big as your fist. In theory, it's just for decoration, although

I'm told it can be made to illuminate. I always picture the staff as similar to the one Merlin must've carried in all those ancient Arthurian legends.'

**'Do you know whose staff it was?'** 'We believe it was owned by a mage named Carvin, who happened to be Centauri. Other than the fact that she was female—an unusual thing, considering the social status of Centauri women—little is known about her.'

**Others:** Theresa will answer any other questions as best she can without compromising herself, her employer or her true mission. If the meeting goes too long she rushes the group to action, explaining that other groups may have heard of the staff and might be looking for it. She ends the meeting as follows:

*After your questions are done, Theresa rises to leave. 'I'm going back to my quarters to await word of your success. I can't stress to you enough how much I want that artefact. If you should encounter any difficulties, you can contact me in my quarters in Blue Section, room 624. Should your search require the expenditure of any additional funds, I'll be happy to authorise them within reason. I don't want to know about anything illegal, however. Do what you have to do and keep your methods to yourself. Like Roland Anderson, I only care about results. Good day.'*

*At that, she departs swiftly, with a final word of farewell to Alison Fernandez, who remains with you. She looks excited about another chance to work with her old friends once again.*

The players now have a chance to get started hunting for the techno-mage artefact, speak more to Alison or head back to their quarters to gather supplies. Alison, if asked, says that she does not know much about Theresa Cross, having only just been assigned to her employ in the past two weeks. Ms. Cross rarely speaks about anything other than business. She spends all of her free time reading.

If the players attempt to access station records to find out where the techno-mages were staying, they need a Technical (electronics) check (DC 20) to dig up the required information. Several had quarters in Brown One, but these have been re-rented many times since then and any other occupants surely would have noticed a staff. If the players want to check, they can do so. Brown 115 is occupied by a pair of married humans on a month-long vacation, Brown 132 has a single Narn who fancies himself a chef and Brown 136 is currently empty.

There is a record of a group of techno-mages 'taking over' a considerable area near the engineering section of Brown

Seven. If the players got the name Carvin from Theresa, a search for that name in the techno-mage records shows no specific quarters rented by that individual. If they access station entry and exit logs, with a Technical (electronics) check (DC 22) they will note the name Carvin among the techno-mages entering the station but no record of her departure. She is reported dead with the other mages in the destruction of their transport.

## Encounter Two: Deep in Brown Seven

*Brown Seven is just like most other lower levels of Downbelow—a veritable maze of corridors and accessways surrounding numerous rooms, open spaces and hidden ventilation ducts. Every now and then someone walks past, eyes downcast and feet shuffling. This is a place where only the lurkers dwell and you keep your wary hands on your weapons.*

Brown Seven is 'ruled' by a criminal by the name of Frankie the Rat, a weaselly individual who controls a network of lurkers, drug peddlers and informants. He likes to think he knows everything that goes on in Brown Sector but in truth he is just a small-time scavenger with big dreams and a bigger mouth.

When the techno-mages arrived on the station during 'The Geometry of Shadows' they displaced Frankie by scaring him off with a flashy show of magic. There were also a couple of injuries among his men after an ill-fated attempt to clock one of the mages upside the head and steal his possessions. After a few 'fireflies' dogged his heels, stinging him over and over and resisting every attempt to get rid of them, Frankie wisely moved his operation underground.

After the mages departed Frankie returned and reasserted himself, but he is a paranoid sort and did everything he could think of to make sure there were not any 'spells' lingering about. One of his cronies, Ryan 'Bug-man' Bordeaux, chanced upon a mage device about the size and shape of an ordinary rivet. Ryan was using an electronics-sensing device to check for bugs and turned the rivet over to Frankie. Unaware of the item's purpose, Frankie sold it to a black market buyer for a cool two thousand credits, but later found out through the grapevine that he had been robbed. Techno-mage devices are all but priceless. After that he began a careful but secret search for other items, eventually locating the staff. Now he is sure he is going to be rich beyond the dreams of avarice and has put forth a secret call for an auction to be held this very night.

It was this auction that informed Theresa Cross of the staff's existence and brought her to the station, but she has not divulged this fact because doing so would suggest a criminal connection she does not wish to have investigated. Instead she has set the players on the trail, certain that they will locate the staff's owner and retrieve it for her—and without any large-scale financial transaction to muddle things. What she does not know—what *nobody* knows—is that when Frankie touched the staff, he set off an alarm that warned Carvin's master that someone other than her was now in possession of the artefact. Thus, as this module begins, the powerful techno-mage Alwyn is on his way to Babylon 5 to retrieve the device. He does not know precisely where it is, but he does know its approximate location on the station and will stop at nothing to keep his former pupil's weapon from falling into the wrong hands.

### The Search

When the players arrive in Brown Seven, they can attempt two possible courses of action—searching the area for the staff and interviewing people looking for information. If they want, they can search for days—Brown Seven is huge and the amount of territory to cover is far too much for even a very large group to accomplish successfully. Keep an eye on how much time is spent looking. The players have about six hours before the auction takes place, the buyer takes the device and the action proceeds to the next encounter. If the players have not made any progress by then, there is a significant chance Alwyn will simply depart following the staff's energy signature and that will be the end of this module.

If the players start interviewing people about the techno-mages, let them make a Gather Information check. Based on the results of the roll they can learn the following things. Higher results generate better and more accurate information. Retries are allowed but each takes about an hour of talking and interviewing. The Games Master can roleplay these attempts or simply provide the data shown, depending on his style of Games Mastering. All encounters will be with shabbily dressed, nondescript individuals typical of most lurkers.

If the players roll at least 16 on one of these attempts—which should not be hard if they have a decent information gatherer available—they discover the general area where the mages were staying, which is the starboard side of Brown Seven. If they roll 20 or less, they need two hours of searching to locate the open 'courtyard' area where the mages gathered during their stay. On a roll of 21-25 they get enough data to zero in on that zone within only one hour. A roll of 26 or greater points them to the exact spot, which they can proceed to immediately.



Die Roll	Quote	Other Information Gained
10 or less	‘Techno-mages? What the hell are you babbling about?’	Nothing
11-15	‘Oh, yeah, I remember them. They were walking around in robes and stuff all the time, making life difficult for us decent folk. I kept my distance—didn’t want to get blown up or anything, y’know.’	Not much, but the subject tells a fantastic story of a mage pointing a wand at somebody and making him burst into flame. A simple check of station medical records shows nothing like this ever actually happened.
16-20	‘Oh, those guys! Yeah, they were great! I hadn’t felt free in a long time. When they showed up, they scared off Frankie and all his buddies. You should’ve seen ‘em scattering like the roaches they are! I wish those wizards had stuck around a bit longer.’	The subject explains that Frankie the Rat runs this part of Downbelow and is usually quick to deal with any threat. He was not stupid enough to challenge the mages, though, and scurried off when they claimed this level as their own. No information is available about where the mages stayed—if pressed, this interviewee grudgingly admits he kept his distance, on the port side of the station. He did not see the mages there very often.
21-25	‘I tried not to look too close at those wizard types. Yeah, I was curious, but down here you learn not to mess with people more powerful than you. Frankie tried it, and look what happened to him! He was still salving those burns for a week after they left.’	Everything in the previous section, plus the subject explains that two of Frankie’s goons tried to attack a mage and wound up unconscious. After that, two or three fireflies that could pass through walls began constantly harassing Frankie and burning his skin. He got the hint and left the level to the mages, but moved right back in after they departed. This individual knows that the mages spent most of their time on the starboard side of the level and points the players in that direction but does not give any more details.
26-30	‘Oh, yeah, Frankie was pissed after those mages burned him with one of their spells. He tried getting even, but they were gone. He did get his revenge, though. Turns out he found one of their magic devices and sold it for a huge profit. Don’t tell anybody, though! This place will be swarming with treasure hunters!’	Same as above, plus this guy knows about the sale of the techno-mage rivet. If asked for a description, he does not know anything except that he is sure it was very small (palm-sized or less), so it could not be the staff. If the players ask where it was found, he points them to a large antechamber, but warns them Frankie’s men like to meet there.
31+	‘What, are you here for the auction? You need to talk to Frankie.’	With this roll the players learn about the existence of an auction. If they press for more, the speaker admits he does not know exactly what it is for, but is aware that it is for a techno-mage device of some kind. The auction is later that evening in Brown 750A, a conference room near the centre of the level.

## The Courtyard

Near the starboard edge of Brown Seven there is a large open room mostly empty of furniture. The room has two levels, the top of which includes a railing and catwalk. There is a double-walled airlock on the side, as this area was intended for the transfer of large cargo (but is in fact rarely used). Two entrances, one on either side, lead to hallways heading back towards the main corridors. Ladders lead up to the catwalks in four places, two on each wall. The chamber, referred to as ‘the Courtyard’ by the residents, is presently empty except for a group of Frankie’s goons watching the place.

Along one edge of the Courtyard, just to the right of the access panel controlling the airlock, is a secret compartment. A persistent mage illusion (see sidebar) makes this area look just like a blank, featureless section of wall. However, an object passes right through the illusion into a space beyond—an empty area that was once large enough to house the staff. Carvin hid her weapon here during her last hours on the station, when she purported a deception on Ambassador Mollari (see the *Passing of the Techno-Mages* trilogy by Jeanne Cavelos for details). This illusionary wall cannot be detected by any sensing equipment but can be stumbled onto with a Search check (DC 20) in the Courtyard.

## Kateen

**3<sup>rd</sup> Level Drazi Lurker/1<sup>st</sup> Level Soldier**

**Hit Points:** 14

**Initiative:** +4 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 20 ft.

**DV:** 13 (+3 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +4/+4 melee or +6 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Weapons Training, Damage Reduction 5 (1 natural, 4 armour), Survivor's Luck

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +3, Will -1

**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 7, Cha 12

**Skills:** Climb +3, Balance +8, Bluff +7, Escape Artist +8, Intimidate +8, Search +7, Sense Motive +4, Spot +5

**Feats:** Ambidexterity, Combat Reflexes, Improved Unarmed Strike, Two-Weapon Fighting

**Equipment:** Flak jacket, club, knife, trick dice (always come up '7'), 20 credit chits, rat jacket

Kateen is a rare 'smart' Drazi who has given up on his own race as a bunch of hopeless lunheads. Instead, he tried to make his fortune on Babylon 5 and lost everything gambling. Frankie covered his debts in exchange for service, which Kateen gives willingly, although he still squanders all his pay on games of chance. He will attempt to bluff the players with his forceful demeanour and insistence that there is 'nothing to see here.' However, if they fail to leave right away, he lunges at them immediately, wielding a club in one hand and a knife in the other.

Note: Each of the Non-Player Characters in this section wear 'rat jackets', which are basically just simulated leather coats with a cartoon rodent emblazoned on the lapel. Frankie trades some of his 'special items' to Disney Planet under the table in exchange for these 'uniforms'. All of Frankie's men wear them, most not knowing or caring about their origins.

## Fat Robert

**3<sup>rd</sup> Level Human Lurker**

**Hit Points:** 15

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 11 (+1 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +7 melee or +2 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Damage Reduction 2 (armour), Survivor's Luck

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 8

**Skills:** Gather Information +5, Listen +7, Profession (bodyguard) +7, Search +6, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7

**Feats:** Improved Unarmed Strike, Toughness, Weapon Focus (brass knuckles)

**Equipment:** Padded armour, brass knuckles, 10 credit chits, rat jacket

Fat Robert easily weighs 350 pounds and stands six and a half feet tall. He looks bulky and slow but is in fact surprisingly quick on his feet. He attacks by pummelling opponents senseless with his brass knuckles, which score 1d4+4 subdual damage thanks to his surprising strength and power. His padded armour will not fit anyone who is not as overweight as he is.

## Sharpshooters

**1<sup>st</sup> Level Human Lurkers**

**Hit Points:** 6

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 12 (+2 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +0 melee or +3 ranged

**Special Qualities:** None

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9

**Skills:** Hide +3, Listen +2, Spot +3

**Feats:** Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (PPG)

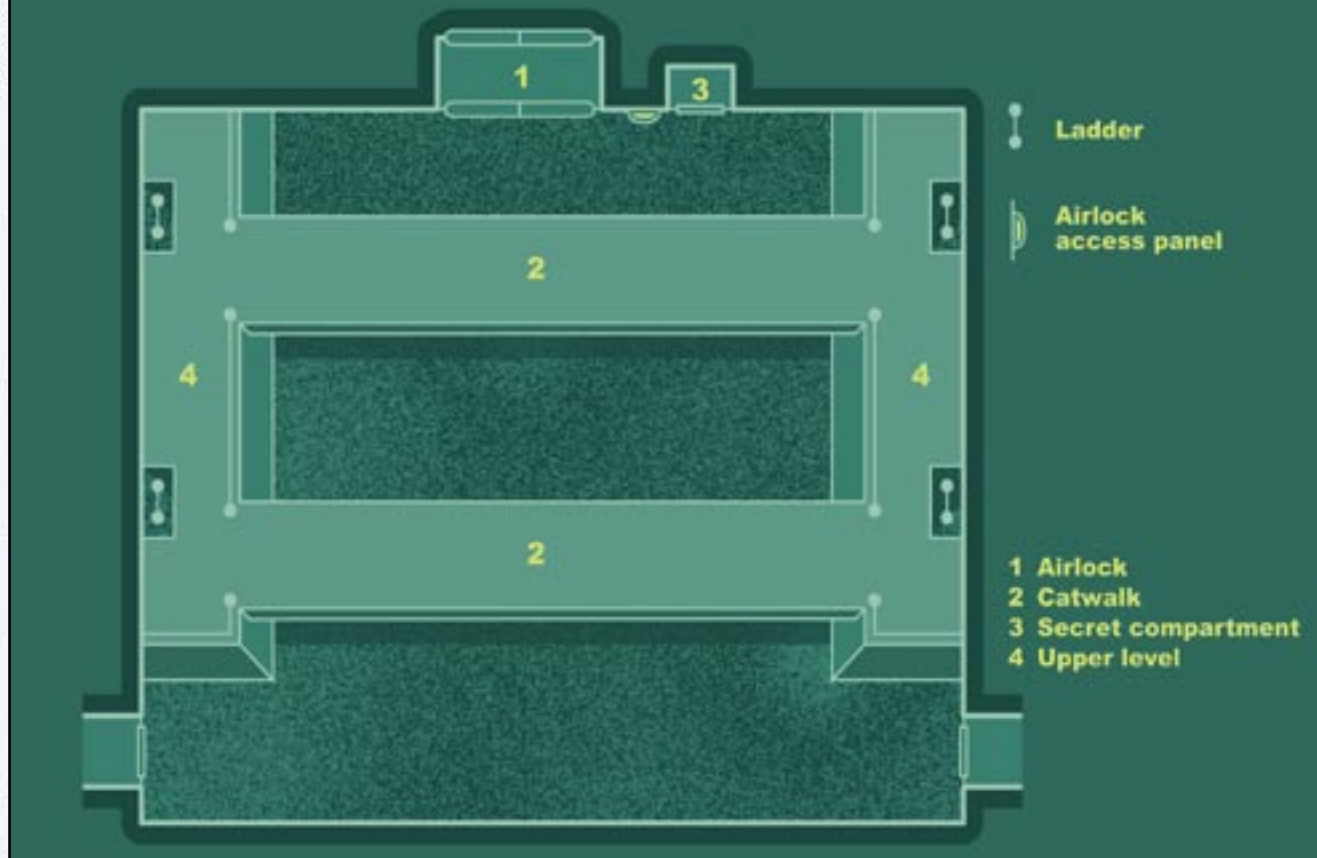
**Equipment:** PPG Model 10, rat jacket

These two men are positioned on the catwalk above the Courtyard. One is sitting down reading a book while the other is napping. If Kateen begins arguing with someone (or combat starts), the first sharpshooter gets to his knees and aims at the closest potential target. The other must make a Listen check (DC 15) each round the arguing continues before he awakens and does the same thing. Neither actually starts firing until either Kateen or one of the invaders attacks.

Note: As long as the sharpshooters remain on the catwalk, they have one-quarter cover against anyone beneath them. The ladders are 15 feet high if anyone wishes to climb up to their level. In the event they need to flee, the sharpshooters have no problem leaping down from the catwalks, accepting the subdual damage from the fall.



## The Courtyard



The problem is the goons will not allow anyone to actually search the place. Frankie is convinced that the techno-mages left more of their 'magic items' behind, and eventually intends to tear the Courtyard apart one bolt at a time. First, though, he is going to make a fortune selling the staff before risking drawing any attention to himself with major modifications to the station. In the meantime, he wants to be sure nobody else shows up to help themselves to 'his' property.

When the players approach, they are immediately challenged by Kateen, a Drazil lurker who has become one of Frankie's most trusted aides. Kateen is a bulky Drazil who is very confident of his fighting ability and loves to bluster and threaten. With Fat Robert, a very large human guard, at his side, he will attempt to force back anyone trying to enter the Courtyard. He also has two other guards positioned on the catwalk, but one is reading a book and the other is asleep. Should the players attack without warning and rush Kateen and Robert, the guards up top will be taken by surprise. The book-reader needs a full round to react, while the sleeping

one needs to make a Listen check (DC 15) to react to the fight. If both Kateen and Fat Robert drop, the guards on the catwalk will flee rather than fight, unless they possess clear superiority.

Should the players depart without fighting, the guards relax but remain wary. The players could potentially storm the place from two different directions in a surprise attack, which would be an aggressive tactic but one that avoids the possibility of being aimed at by the sharpshooters. They could also attempt to sneak in and search without being noticed, but they have to beat both Kateen and Robert's Spot checks to pull this off.

Another possibility is to shut down the power to the Courtyard, which requires a Technical (engineering) check (DC 18) from a station 40 feet down one of the adjoining corridors. There is no way to rig this to happen automatically—someone will have to throw the switch by hand. Turning off the lights will distract and unnerv the guards but will not cause them to

### Wall Illusion Generator

This device is the size and shape of an ordinary connecting bolt, of the sort fastened to the inside of small compartments throughout known space. When placed within five feet of an open area the device automatically generates an illusory surface identical to that of the surrounding furniture, wall or other region. The illusion cannot be detected with ordinary scanning equipment, but since it does not block anything but sight it can be located through touch or other senses. Generally, locating a panel concealed by the illusion generator requires a Search check (DC 20). Locating the bolt that actually generates the illusion requires a further Search check (DC 25) because the bolt looks so convincingly real. Of course, anyone who realises that techno-mage technology is at work will be aware that a device *has* to be there someplace, so they will likely take 20 looking for it.

The illusion generator is a unique item that can be sold on the black market for 2,000 credits. The players could also keep it, using it to hide small areas and compartments from view (but no space large enough to conceal anything larger than a Small creature). They could also turn it in to Theresa Cross in lieu of the staff (see 'Aftermath' at the end of this module).

leave their posts. It will, however, allow the players to attack under the cover of darkness (and none of the lurkers have the Blind-Fight feat).

At any rate, if the players defeat, chase off or otherwise deal with the guards, they can search the Courtyard at their leisure. They can also question Kateen or the others. The sharpshooters do not know anything, but both Kateen and Fat Robert are aware that Frankie recently found the techno-mage staff and is planning to auction it tonight. If the players can intimidate, bluff, scan or otherwise drag this information out of the guards, they will learn that the staff is to be sold in an area of Brown Seven known as the Auction Block—and on this very night!

## Encounter Three: The Auction Block

The Auction Block is located in the deepest recesses of Brown Seven. The room is shaped much like the Courtyard, except it is twice as wide and the catwalk on the second level has enough room for a set of benches. Auctions of illegal goods,

slaves and stolen merchandise take place in this area on a reasonably regular basis, but somehow always escape the notice of Station Security. A series of well-placed informants report the approach of Security forces, allowing everyone involved in an auction to disappear into the woodwork like roaches in the light.

Anyone with Lurker's Knowledge or Knowledge (Brown Sector) can make a Knowledge check (DC 20) to be aware of the presence of the Auction Block. However, there is no reason anyone should suspect the staff is to be auctioned there, unless they hear about it through a Gather Information roll or by interrogating Kateen. Even if they do happen to know of the Block's existence, they will not know the time of the actual auction without further research.

Attending the auction is a difficult matter. There are several possible means to do this:

**Getting Past the Guards:** Guards patrol the three halls leading towards the Auction Block and prevent the entry of any unauthorised personnel. Approaching players must produce identicards identifying themselves as buyers—a Bluff or similar check will not get the players past the guards without one. If the players persist in their attempts, the guard sounds the alarm, drawing a group of lurkers (use the Sharpshooter statistics on p19) armed with PPGs to chase off the invaders. Defeating a lone guard quickly simply means the players will later encounter a much larger group as they approach the Block itself, whereupon they will be challenged and attacked. A concerted effort to fight their way in only scatters the rest of the lurkers, cancelling the auction and forcing it to be rescheduled for a later time when the 'heat' is off.

Should the players be attacked by a large number of guards, they will be attacked with unarmed combat and subdued. The guards will not mow them down. Survivors are taken to see Frankie the Rat (see sidebar).

**Rat Jacket Disguise:** One potential method that should suggest itself right away is the use of rat jackets for disguise purposes. The players can get four of these from the guards in the Courtyard, although Fat Robert's coat is so huge it will look like a blanket on anyone who is not of a similar build. The players can acquire more jackets by ambushing other lone guards they can catch patrolling the corridors or keeping prying eyes away from the Auction Block. However, anyone with a striking appearance should avoid attempting to infiltrate the Block. Frankie and his top echelons know there are no Minbari on Brown Seven, for example, nor are there any members of other unusual races. An individual with some other noteworthy feature, like a scar or a recognisable



## Kanim Hu

8<sup>th</sup> Level Human Agent

**Hit Points:** 22

**Initiative:** +3 (+3 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 19 (+9 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +7/+7/+2/+2 melee or +9/+3 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Damage Reduction 2 (armour), Security Systems, Sneak Attack +1d6, Skill Mastery (balance, escape artist)

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +9, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 13

**Skills:** Balance +14, Climb +14, Computer Use +13, Escape Artist +14, Gather Information +12, Jump +14, Pilot +14, Spot +11

**Feats:** Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Improved Unarmed Strike, Two-Weapon Fighting

**Equipment:** Padded armour, black overcoat, briefcase (with computer), identicard

Kanim Hu fancies himself a martial arts master and will fight using a combination of several martial styles unfamiliar to anyone skilled in such things. He makes four attacks per round and dances about like a gymnast. If anyone fires a handgun at him, he says they are 'without honour' and attempts to deal with them first. In the face of more than one opponent with such weapons, he attempts to flee. If he drops to fewer than six hit points, he lowers his hands and surrenders, stating there is no shame in losing to a superior foe.

face, should also avoid this course of action. If the group tries to penetrate the interior of the Block with such people among them, they had better have some good disguises. Give the guards a 'generic' Spot bonus of +8 against any Disguise skill employed by the players for this purpose—just roll once, not once per guard. Success indicates they challenge the offending player and accost the group, while failure means they do not notice, or just assume the individual in question is one of Frankie's new acquisitions.

**Replacing a Bidder:** Another intriguing possibility is to ambush and replace one of the bidders for the staff. The problem of locating them is not a problem at all, really. Virtually every resident of Brown Seven is either a dirty, unkempt lurker or one of Frankie's goons in those telltale jackets. If the players keep a lookout, they can easily (Spot DC 10) notice a human of Oriental ancestry in a long black

overcoat advancing through the sector towards the Block. This is Kanim Hu, a private collector who wants to buy the staff for his own edification. He has no bodyguards, which would be a mistake if he were not totally capable of defending himself. If the players ambush him in hand-to-hand combat, they are in for a rude surprise.

Hu carries a briefcase containing a computer that provides access to his funds for the sole purpose of bidding on and winning the staff. Opening the briefcase requires a successful Technical (electronics) check (DC 25) to bypass the security locks—failure destroys the contents in a quick acid bath. The players can also attempt to intimidate Hu into opening the case but he receives a +5 bonus to resist because surrendering the electronic key is totally against his nature. Hostile telepathic attacks can also force his hand.

The computer has access to an account created specifically for the auction to come. Hu has up to 500,000 credits available for this purpose, but he has taken steps to ensure the lurkers do not steal his computer and try to take the money without his direct authorisation. Loyal allies back home stand ready to approve any transfer he attempts while at the auction. He will transmit the password 'Dynasty' to conclude a legal transaction and the word 'Ming' if he is being coerced. Because these words are not coded into the machine, no level of Computer Use or Technical skill can discover them. The players can use the machine easily enough with Computer Use (DC 13) but cannot do much with it except try to make a transaction—and any attempt to actually complete a transfer without the proper code word effectively renders the device useless.

If the players do not have Hu with them and attempt to take his place, they can pass themselves off as his entourage using his identicard. This gets them into the auction easily enough. They can even use the computer to assure Frankie that they have enough money to make good on any bids. However, leaving Hu conscious but bound is a mistake—he will try to use his Escape Artist skill to get free and locate Frankie on his own. Since only Hu knows the details of the original auction announcement, he can use this to prove he is the real bidder, which results in the players' capture by Frankie. The group had better take care to bind him well or just keep him unconscious somewhere until the auction is over.

**Ventilation Shafts:** A successful Knowledge (Brown Sector) check (DC 15) reminds a player that a network of ventilation shafts meanders throughout the area, including the ceiling over the room now used as the Auction Block. Of course, Frankie knows this too and has placed several traps in the corridors to keep unwanted visitors out. Assuming the players move as close to the Auction Block as possible

before beginning to sneak in, they will encounter only two traps (a longer course means they run into three) plus the alarm system directly above the Block.

The shafts are five-foot-wide corridors with dim emergency lighting only that provides a -2 penalty to all ability and skill checks, unless the players bring their own lights. There are no guards, so there is no need to map out the area. However, in various places—usually at three-way intersections—there are various traps. Locating them requires a Spot check (DC 20) or a Search check (DC 15), keeping in mind the penalties for inadequate light. If the players have plenty of time, they can take 20 if they need to, but this stretches out the trip to the Block to a full two hours! Disarming a trap is a Technical (mechanical) check (DC 21). Taking 20 on this requires 15 minutes.

If a trap is set off, everyone within 30 feet of that spot takes 2d6 damage (Reflex for half). Damage is fire, electrical or acid depending on the trap (random choice). Anyone on top of the trap (five feet away or less) takes +2 damage. The trap cannot be defeated by covering it up and cannot be avoided by sneaking past—it must be disarmed. A single trap will not alert guards but a second one going off will. However, it is unlikely that a proper group will be caught unawares by a second trap.

When the players reach the Auction Block itself, they can spot another trap, but this one has DC 25 to remove and is quite obviously attached to an alarm. Failure to disarm this one alerts the entire Auction Block to their presence. Getting past it, however, allows the players to observe the auction from a safe hiding place.

**Other:** The players may think up another solution to the problem of getting into the auction. Let them be creative. Note that it is possible to try something and fail. Guards will not kill the players, but will take them captive and drag them before Frankie the Rat. If he is convinced that they are not with Security he will let them live, although they will be restrained. He is so concerned with the auction going off properly that he does not mind having a few ‘observers’. After all, he plans to kill them later, so it does not matter what they observe in the interim.

## The Auction

Nothing less than a direct invasion by Security forces will stop Frankie’s auction from actually taking place. He smells a trip to the big time if everything comes off properly. What he does not know is that his right-hand man, a shifty Centauri named Tolona, has created a fake staff and swapped it for the real one. While the auction takes place, he is planning

### Frankie the Rat

6<sup>th</sup> Level Human Lurker

**Hit Points:** 26

**Initiative:** +7 (+3 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 15 (+5 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +3 melee or +7 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Damage Reduction 4 (armour), Survivor’s Luck

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 8, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 15

**Skills:** Appraise +10, Balance +11, Bluff +10, Escape Artist +11, Hide +11, Move Silently +11, Pick Pocket +11, Spot +8, Technical (electronics) +10

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (PPG)

**Equipment:** Flak jacket, multi-part PPG, knife, 200 credit chits, rat jacket (black)

Frankie the Rat is a charismatic leader with a thin build, beady eyes and narrow face that gives him his obvious nickname. He is actually quite charming, in a used car salesman kind of way, although he is also an accomplished liar and will not hesitate to use that skill. He is very sure of himself and above all wants nothing to go wrong with his special auction. If he captures the players, he will tie them up and make them watch the proceedings, all the while standing with arms crossed and a huge smile on his face.

to slip away and flee the station with his prize, which he will then sell to a buyer who contacted him secretly, offering one million credits in exchange for the device. For Tolona, this is the opportunity of a lifetime and he has set up a distraction to aid his escape—an explosive located underneath the auctioneer’s pedestal.

Presumably the players will be watching the auction from one spot or another. They might be posing as guards or as Kanim Hu. They might also be in the vents on the ceiling, or they could even be prisoners of Frankie. Read the following boxed text, making adjustments as needed depending on the group’s point of view.

*As you watch, the auditorium begins to fill. The place is lousy with guards, but you also see a number of other individuals that do not look like lurkers at all. A human woman in a long dress, a Drazi in a military uniform, a Narn in full battle armour, a Caucasian human in a business suit and an Asian*



in a black overcoat all climb stairs to the top level, where they take their places on a series of benches overlooking the auction block. Several guards accompany them, along with a thin, mousy man in a black jacket and a taller, heavysset Centauri enforcer type following on his heels. From the descriptions you have heard and the obvious quality of his uniform, the mouse-like man must be Frankie the Rat. His Centauri bodyguard sees him into his seat, whispers something and hurries off, going back down the stairs and out the side door.

A moment later, Frankie raises his hand and waves at the doorway below. A tall, bearded man comes out bearing a large box. Two bruisers armed with rifles stand at his side as he proceeds to the podium and opens the container. With a flourish, he holds up a black staff topped by a clear crystal that seems to glitter in the ambient light. At once the man begins to speak. 'We shall get down to business at once,' he says loudly. 'This staff, once the property of a techno-mage, could be possessed of any number of amazing powers. Its owner will have access to amazing technologies unknown by any of our kind. Shall we start the bidding at fifty thousand?'

At this point the players might become involved in the auction (if they are masquerading as Kanim Hu) or may simply watch. The auction quickly progresses up into the hundreds of thousands, jumping 10,000 at a time. At 100,000 the auctioneer moves to 25,000 credit increments. At 300,000, he goes to 50,000 credit increments. At 500,000, he jumps to 100,000 credit increments and several of the bidders drop out. The players can continue bidding if they want to try to bluff their way through and have not already revealed how much money they have to spend. Eventually the Narn and Drazi wind up getting to a million, at which point the auction is suddenly halted:

*The room is silent as the auctioneer pauses at the one-million-credit mark. They are hanging on his every word now. 'One million is the bid,' he says loudly. 'Do I hear one point one million? Anyone? One million going once, one million twice...'*

*Then, suddenly, a voice rings out from the far side of the second level. All eyes turn sharply to that spot, where a somewhat portly robed figure stands, arms out and face screwed up in anger. 'That staff is not for such as you!' he shouts. 'It is not your property! I have come to claim it as my own!'*

*Nearby, Frankie levels a finger and screams, 'A techno-mage! Kill him!'*

*Then, before anyone else can react, the podium in the centre of the room explodes in a gout of flame!*

If the players are masquerading as guards or are otherwise located on the lower level, they take 3d6 fire damage, with a Reflex save (DC 13) for half damage. Players on the upper level automatically take half damage and earn a Reflex save (DC 13) for one-quarter damage. The two bruisers and the auctioneer are killed in the blast, as are two other guards. The remaining eight guards are stunned for one round by the unexpected explosion.

In the next round all the bidders flee down the stairs and out the door while Frankie screams 'My staff!' and rushes downstairs to find it. The eight guards (use the Sharpshooter stats on p.19) take aim at the techno-mage, whom they assume set off the blast, and follow Frankie's last order to the letter.

The players can take sides as they will, or even try to grab the staff if they are close enough. Locating it in the rubble requires a Spot check (DC 20) or, if they spend a full-round action looking for it, a Search check (DC 15). Frankie will use Spot only and will attack anyone else who appears to be looking for the staff or who finds it before he does. However, the staff has been broken in half in the blast, and quite obviously does not have any 'advanced technology' inside—in fact, it is just a piece of carefully carved wood. If the players show this to Frankie, he will stop fighting and order his men to stand down.

The techno-mage, Alwyn, will fight only as long as he is under attack. If the players aid him, he will help them with spells should the need arise. If they help the guards or Frankie, he will assume they are against him and attack them as well. However, the minute he realises the staff is a fake, he will stop and beg the others to do the same. 'We have no reason to battle,' he says. 'The real staff has been stolen!'

After the battle is over, Frankie realises his bodyguard is nowhere to be found, which tips him off that Tolona was the culprit. 'That bastard! He stole my property!' he wails. 'You there! I don't know who you are or where you came from, but I'll give you ten thousand credits if you get that staff back! Bring me back Tolona alive, and you can have another thousand! Go! Hurry, before he gets away!'

Alwyn, of course, does not care about any of that. 'The staff wasn't yours in the first place,' he explains. 'I would punish you, but I think that damage has already been done.' He turns to leave, heading for the exit in a whirl of rune-encrusted

## Alwyn

### 9<sup>th</sup> Level Human Techno-Mage

**Hit Points:** 13

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 13 (+3 reflex)

**Attacks:** +4 base, +3 melee, +4 ranged

**Special Qualities:** FTL Attunement, Mage Focus (dancing), Organelles (+4 saves), Pinnacle, Place of Power (Regula 4), Technomagery

**Saves:** +3 Fortitude, +3 Reflex, +8 Will

**Abilities:** Str 8, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 18

**Skills:** Bluff +16, Computer Use +9, Concentration +13, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (Star Systems) +14, Magery +23, Pilot +12, Sense Motive +12, Sleight of Hand +12, Spot +8, Technical (electronics) +15, Technical (mechanical) +8

**Feats:** Broad Aptitude, Cool Under Pressure, High Aptitude, Invisible Spell, Iron Will, Multi-Tasking, Ordered Mind, Skill Focus (Magery)

**Primary Aptitudes:** Enhancement

**Weak Aptitudes:** Creation

**Power Points:** 80

**Spells:** *acrobat, alertness, appeal, armour, artillery fireball, bright light, clarity, contortionist, control flame, create fire, danger sense, darkvision, detect lie, determine direction, dreamspeech, elemental resistance, explosive fireball, falsehood, far speech, fireball, luck, greater armour, greater elemental resistance, greater fireball, greater luck, greater oration, greater personal shield, greater phantom image, hardiness, improved fortitude, improved reflexes, improved will, insight, lesser armour, lesser elemental resistance, lesser personal shield, light, mass darkvision, meeting, might, minor healing, nimbleness, observation, oration, personal shield, phantom image, sharp ears, sharp eyes, spyspot, stabilise, skilfulness, translation, voice*

**Equipment:** Staff, *ring of invisibility*, flashy clothes, cape, jaunty hat

**Pinnacle:** Illusion Mantle (golden dragon), Gunsight (x2), Long-Range Weapons (x2)

Alwyn is a human with silver hair and the faintest appearance of age beginning to show on his face. He wears colourful, vibrant clothing and enjoys carousing. Alwyn believes that techno-mages should enjoy all that life has to offer. He is passionate about a great many things. In particular, he believes that mages should take responsibility for those who do not share their power. Mages who prefer to hide from the rest of the galaxy are the ones he considers most hypocritical and Alwyn will not hesitate to tell them so.

After the death of his student Carvin just after 'The Geometry of Shadows', Alwyn despaired for a long time. He did not hide with the other mages, but has instead been spending a great deal of time and effort secretly fighting against the Shadows. He cannot, however, abide the use of his student's staff by non-mages, which he considers a great dishonour to her memory.

Further information on the techno-mages can be found in *The Techno-Mages Fact Book*, also available from Mongoose Publishing. If you do not have that book, treat the spells as feats that take a standard action to employ, using a number of Power Points approximately equal to their strength (e.g., a standard *fireball* is not nearly as expensive as an *explosive* or *greater* version). Note that a mage's *fireball* is not like the *Core Rulebook I* version since it only affects a single target. Most spells only affect a single target, except for those with the *mass* descriptor.

Alwyn begins the fight with *greater armour*, *greater personal shield* and *greater elemental resistance* already in effect upon his person. *Greater armour* provides a +3 natural armour bonus to DV, while the *personal shield* adds a +3 deflection bonus and the *elemental resistance* provides 3 DR against energy attacks (i.e. against PPGs). These are not reflected in his stats as listed above. If he gets into trouble, he employs his *ring of invisibility* to disappear—this only has enough power to last about eight rounds, however, so he will not dally.

Note that during his fight with the Shadows Alwyn has achieved a further level of experience beyond the stats given in *The Techno-Mages Fact Book*. In particular, he is now better able to defend himself in a fight, as his spells will indicate.



## Hangar Bay



brown robes. If anyone tries to follow him, he uses his *ring of invisibility* to vanish after passing through the exit door.

At this point the players can either take Frankie's deal and try to get the staff themselves or try to chase after the technomage to help him instead (Alwyn keeps the invisibility active only until he turns the first corner, since the ring's power only lasts for up to eight rounds). They could also go with the mage but secretly plot to bring the staff back to Frankie later. However, Alwyn is not easy to fool. He will very likely see through such a deception and he surely will not give the staff up without a fight.

If the players try to follow Alwyn, he will not dissuade them, although he insists they watch their step. As soon as they prove themselves, however, he drops all distrust and starts slapping them on the back and joking as if they are old buddies. He does not seem like a man who holds a lot of

grudges, although of course he will pursue the staff to the ends of the universe if he must.

## Encounter Four: The Exchange

Because the players do not have any idea where Tolona went, their options are limited. Tracking him is impossible, considering his head start. If they figure out that the technomage has a way of locating the staff, they can follow him and hope he leads them to Tolona (and he will). Another option is to ask Frankie where Tolona lives. Frankie will gladly lead them to the turncoat's quarters and let them look around. He has left nothing incriminating in the room (and Frankie will not let the players confiscate any of Frankie's property)—the only possessions left behind are a terminal, furniture, some clothing and a rat jacket. However, if the players think to

look for deleted files on Frankie's computer, a Computer Use check (DC 21) discovers the following deleted message:

'I agree to your terms. Upon satisfactory completion of the trade, one million credits will be transferred into your numbered Swiss account. Transport off Babylon 5 and a new identity have also been arranged. Deliver the item to docking slip B-12 immediately after the conclusion of the auction and everything will be taken care of. (Signed) Garvan.'

Rory Garvan is the name of one of the other auction bidders! Frankie swears revenge and immediately tries to hire the players to slay him before he escapes with the staff. He offers 1,000 credits for the man's head, but will go as high as 5,000 (he actually does not mind if the price escalates because he has no intention of paying). Frankie then hurries off to gather his own men to attack the ship but he admits the players will be able to move faster than he can—especially with most of his men wounded or incapacitated—and urges them to leave immediately.

If the players are with Alwyn, he takes his time tracking the staff. Tracking it requires concentration and is not an exact science. He takes quite a bit of time to triangulate—in fact, exactly as much time as it takes the players to move from Tolona's quarters directly to docking slip B-12. Thus, regardless of which paths the players take, they arrive at the shuttle at the same time—just as Tolona is handing the staff over to Garvan and his bodyguards. The intent is then for Tolona to slip onto an outgoing shuttle bound for Centauri Prime, where he will receive plastic surgery and a new life as a rich man. Meanwhile Garvan will enter his pinnacle and leave.

Outside the shuttle, watched over by his own loyal men, Tolona is pacing nervously, wringing his hands as he waits for the transfer of funds to be approved and completed. Only then does he unlock the DNA-coded lock on the secure briefcase he carries, handing the staff over to Garvan. This whole process takes about two minutes—enough time for the players to plan an attack on the shuttle or call in at most a couple of Security officers if they wish. Depending on their affiliations and what they have been part of already today, they may not want to let Security in on what they are up to.

There are three possible timeframes in which the players might arrive. Also, their actions upon reaching the dock could shift them into a different setup for the final battle. The time periods are:

**Before the Exchange:** This is appropriate if the players move straight to the docking port, either by following Alwyn as he triangulates on the staff or by heading there after discovering the deleted message on Tolona's computer.

## Rory Garvan

3<sup>rd</sup> Level Human Agent/3<sup>rd</sup> Level Soldier

**Hit Points:** 25

**Initiative:** +3 (+3 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 15 (+5 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +6 melee or +7 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Damage Reduction 2 (armour), Security Systems, Sneak Attack +1d6

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 15

**Skills:** Bluff +8, Climb +4, Computer Use +9, Concentration +10, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +11, Listen +10, Pilot +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +10

**Feats:** Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Run, Weapon Focus (PPG)

**Equipment:** Padded armour, business clothes, briefcase with computer terminal

Garvan once served in Earth's GROPOS and fought the Minbari on the ground at Proxima during their invasion. Having seen firsthand the way alien invaders treat humans, he wants to make sure humanity is never similarly threatened again. He now privately funds several companies in their efforts to locate technology towards that end. He intends to take the staff and study it before handing it over to EarthForce at no cost—but not until he gets a chance to develop any technologies it offers, of course.

## Garvan's Bodyguards

1<sup>st</sup> Level Human Soldiers (4)

**Hit Points:** 9

**Initiative:** +6 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 12 (+2 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +2 melee or +4 ranged

**Special Qualities:** None

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +2, Will -1

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 10

**Skills:** Climb +4, Jump +3

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (PPG)

**Equipment:** PPG Model 10, rat jacket

Garvan's bodyguards are not fanatical, but they are well paid. When the battle begins they defend their leader as best they can, covering his movements and taking up defensive positions. Should Garvan fall, they immediately surrender. If Garvan retreats into the ship, they follow.



## Tolona

### 5<sup>th</sup> Level Centauri Lurker

**Hit Points:** 27

**Initiative:** +6 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 13 (+3 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +3 melee or +7 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Damage Reduction 4 (armour), Survivor's Luck

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 11, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16

**Skills:** Appraise +10, Balance +10, Bluff +12, Disguise +11, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +9, Technical (mechanical) +10

**Feats:** Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (PPG)

**Equipment:** Flak jacket, PPG Model 10, 100 credit chits, rat jacket (discarded after he flees), disguise kit

Tolona is a lurker who has finally found a way out—a chance to make a fortune and buy himself a new life at the same time. All he has to do is betray everyone he knows, but that is all right because he has never liked any of those people anyway. He has only stuck by Frankie because he has known sooner or later the little weasel would make a mistake and Tolona could take over his operation. Now he sees his chance and is taking it—no matter what the cost.

## Tolona's Bodyguards (3)

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Level Human Lurkers

**Hit Points:** 8

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 12 (+2 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +1 melee or +4 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Survivor's Luck

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8

**Skills:** Hide +3, Listen +4, Spot +4

**Feats:** Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (PPG)

**Equipment:** PPG Model 10, knife, rat jacket

Tolona has promised these guards a huge payoff after he escapes and they have nowhere to go if things go bad. Thus they fight with some measure of desperation. If Tolona flees they lay down covering fire and follow after him, assuming they are able to do so. They have no loyalty to Garvan and will not help him if his side of the fight gets into trouble.

The players basically arrive at the entrance to the docking port and discover Alwyn there (or they arrive with him, if they manage to keep up with him during the chase). If they have not been with Alwyn all along, he threatens them with violence if they approach too closely. If they agree to help him, he will be their ally in the coming fight and spends a few rounds discussing tactics for the attack. Otherwise he turns invisible again and moves out into the docking bay to find a better ambush position. He then attacks one minute later, during the exchange, unless the players attack beforehand.

**During the Exchange:** This occurs if the players waste a little time on their way to the docking bay, but not too much. When they arrive they find the transfer in progress—Garvan working with a briefcase computer and Tolona opening his case to hand over the staff. Alwyn is nowhere to be seen, but the moment the staff appears he begins an attack by casting an *explosive fireball* from a position of cover next to the ship. In the confusion, guards spread out and notice the players—assuming they are not someplace where spotting them is impossible—so that a full-fledged melee ensues.

**After the Exchange:** If the players wait too long, the exchange concludes and Tolona heads off towards his escape shuttle. Alwyn, without backup, does not risk attacking directly but instead waits to make sure Garvan's ship takes off. In the meantime, of course, he plants a bug on the vessel and retreats to his own ship. He does not allow the players to accompany him and recovers the staff himself after chasing down Garvan's vessel in hyperspace. The players have no chance to get the staff or Garvan at this point, although they can still go after Tolona. Bereft of his bodyguards, the man can easily be caught or arrested before getting far.

## The Final Battle

Assuming one of the first two timetables above is followed, the final battle explodes into a violent clash within the docking bay. Alwyn attacks from invisibility until the power of his ring runs out, while the players engage both Tolona's and Garvan's bodyguards. Depending on the timing of the attack, those two personalities will react differently. If the attack happens early, before the transfer is made, both stand and fight. If the attack happens while the transfer is going on, they each take three full rounds to finish exchanging the items, their only movement being to duck into cover. If the attack happens later, or those three rounds of actions are concluded, Garvan makes for his ship with the staff while Tolona flees to try to reach his shuttle. Alwyn, of course, pursues the staff, while the players can either challenge Tolona or let him go, depending on the situation.

Prior to the fight, the players can summon two Security men (1<sup>st</sup> level soldiers) who are on duty in the area. These men will aid the players in the fight if a Diplomacy check (DC 15) succeeds. Bluff checks can also be tried, but Intimidate checks have a -4 penalty. If all attempts to convince the guards fail, they insist on calling Security and waiting for backup, thereby allowing the potential fight to reach the **After the Exchange** result previously described. The guards will also be drawn to the area three rounds after the firefight begins but unless they recognise the players as having legal enforcement powers, the Security men will demand everyone stand down. If the battle does not stop, they attack the closest targets. The guards each have a standard PPG, +3 attack, 12 DV (14 Dex) and nothing else of note.

The fight takes place in the rectangular hangar bay near the entrance to the shuttle. There are two walkways exiting the docking port—the players are at one doorway and Tolona will try to flee through the other. Several crates and cargo pods are positioned strategically about to provide cover from PPG shots and Alwyn will position himself behind one of these. Garvan has four bodyguards and Tolona has three. Both Garvan and Tolona are standing next to a large (10'x10') cargo crate upon which they will perform the desired exchange.

Should Garvan and his guards enter the ship, he seals the doors and immediately lifts off, radioing Babylon 5 to open the docking ports so he can depart. Unless the players have specifically contacted B5 Security to stop this from happening, the port opens automatically, since Garvan's departure has actually been pre-scheduled. After he gets away, only Alwyn can stop him, using his own ship to track down the staff.

If Tolona flees, he heads for a shuttle on the next docking level. There he uses his Disguise skill to change his own appearance and that of any surviving guards. Players searching for him will need to beat his opposed Disguise roll to catch him before he gets away. Security can also be called in to help locate him, especially if the players have already learned that he is fleeing the station.

Alwyn begins the fight by targeting Garvan and the guards. The techno-mage's only goal is to get the staff, by any means necessary. If he does so, he quits the field and departs, heading for his own vessel. If anyone attacks or pursues him, he defends himself only long enough to assure his escape. Needless death is not his intention here, nor is drawing any more attention to his presence than is absolutely necessary.

## Aftermath

Much depends on the way the final battle plays out. The whole thing could theoretically fizzle if the transaction between Tolona and Garvan plays out without interruption. The fight could also prove to be quite deadly depending upon how the players approach the fight. After all, with all those PPG blasts going off, anything could happen!

The players' motivations also come into play. They probably want the staff, but they should be aware that with a techno-mage here trying to claim it, they are not going to be able to keep it without consequences. Even if Alwyn dies, the reason for his trip here is surely known to the rest of the Order and anyone who is party to theft of a mage's property will eventually be hunted down and dealt with. If the players take the staff and hand it over to Theresa Cross, they are taking a huge risk with potentially grave consequences later in the campaign. The Games Master can handle this in whatever way he sees fit. Taking the staff to Frankie the Rat will be even more disastrous.

After the battle, Security shows up within minutes and locks down the area until everyone involved can be questioned. If the players have not fled they will be held for several hours until the investigation can clear them. They have a lot of explaining to do, of course. What were they doing starting a firefight in a docking bay? Why did they not wait for Security to arrive? At a minimum, a Diplomacy check is probably called for...but let the players roleplay the situation to the hilt.

## Other Possible Post-Module Events

**Rescuing Alwyn:** If Alwyn is in grave trouble and the players rescue him, he will be in their debt. In this situation—and *only* this situation—he will agree to give the staff to them of his own free will. First however, he spends a day on his ship making some modifications to the device to ensure nothing too significant is handed over. Thus reassured that non-mages are truly worth saving and protecting, he departs, leaving the players to do with the staff what they will. Depending on their motives, they could hand it over to Theresa or Frankie, or maybe even offer it up for sale on their own. If they take this latter course, what happens next is entirely up to the Games Master. They might make a huge profit at the cost of annoying Theresa and Frankie, earning their ire—or Alwyn might come back to angrily take his 'gift' back.

**Returning Tolona to Frankie:** If the players nab Tolona and drag him back to Brown Seven, Frankie pays them a bounty



of 1,000 credits (but only after a great deal of whining). If they take the money, he tells them he has not forgotten that they basically invaded his territory and he will remember that the next time they meet. If they refuse the cash, Frankie declares them his friends and admits that he now owes them a 'favour'. At some point in the future they can now call upon him and his 'rat pack' for aid in any one situation—and there is at least one such opportunity available later in this campaign. Frankie's lurkers will not leave the station, but otherwise this can be for almost anything.

Note that once Security shows up at the docking port, they take Tolona into custody for his complicity in setting off a bomb in Brown Seven. To claim the bounty on Tolona, the players must hurry him away before Security forces arrive to start making arrests.

**Claiming the Bounty on Garvan:** The players might also try to score the promised bounty on Garvan but Frankie will not pay it. First he will say he has no proof the players actually took care of the deed and then he will say he never ordered a formal 'hit'. If the players insist, he will eventually settle on 1,000 credits—not the 5,000 originally agreed to—and then kick them off Brown Seven with orders never to return. If they do come back, his guards are to attack them on sight. Frankie becomes a bona fide permanent enemy if the players go this far.

Keep in mind that throughout all of this, Garvan has actually committed no crime! In court he will claim that he was 'lured' to Babylon 5 as part of a 'scam' to steal his money, whereupon he was attacked without provocation by bombs and hooligans. Furthermore, paying one million credits to buy a techno-mage staff is not against the law. He is merely a private citizen trying to acquire a unique item for his collection. Since he really has not done anything 'wrong' and Alwyn does not hang around to press charges for trafficking in stolen techno-mage property, Garvan will eventually be released. Naturally, he immediately flees the station before Frankie can hunt him down. Garvan could then appear later in the campaign as an enemy of the players, as he is not likely to forget their actions against him...and keep in mind that he is *rich*. Rich men have lots of connections...

**Setting Up a Sting on Frankie:** If the players explain what happened in Downbelow, Security may ask them to set up a 'sting' to catch Frankie admitting to various crimes (such as hiring the players to kill Garvan, or the potential murder of Tolona). This could lead to another scenario or two—perhaps Frankie discovers the 'wires' and attacks the players, or he resists arrest and has to be hunted down elsewhere in the station. Of course, if the players' role in such an operation ever gets out, they will likely lose all their Downbelow contacts and will not be trusted by seedier elements ever again.

**Meeting with Theresa:** After all is said and done, Theresa is going to want to know what happened to her precious staff. If the players hand it over (regardless of whether it is the original or the Alwyn-modified version), they receive their reward. If they do not have the staff but do give her the wall illusion generator, she goes ahead and pays them the entire amount, since the staff obviously was beyond their power to acquire. Even if the players fail to hand over any techno-mage items, she still covers their expenses and appreciates their efforts, especially if Alison Fernandez gives a glowing report of their performance. Theresa and Alison then depart the station, promising to return if the players' services are needed again.

### Suggested Experience for This Module

Clearing out the Courtyard: 200

Participating in the auction and the battle that follows: 400

Fighting in the final battle (as opposed to taking the easy way out): 400

Giving the staff or the illusion generator to Theresa: 600

# Module Two: Dark Secrets

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere  
The ceremony of innocence is drowned...  
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,  
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

—W. B. Yeats, 'The Second Coming', as read by G'Kar in 'Revelations'

*Can it be? Can such a thing really happen in today's society?*

*I must know the truth. The future of Humanity could depend on it. Yet I cannot afford to be caught in the act, even by my own people. I can't go myself, for I'll surely be recognised, and I can't trust anyone within the company. Furthermore, no matter what happens, I must have plausible deniability.*

*Fortunately, I know just the team to contact...*

## Background

### Module Summary

- ⑤ Theresa Cross convinces the players to go to Io to look for wreckage of EarthForce One.
- ⑤ The players search the base at Mount Jove for information, possibly including:
  - A sightseeing trip over the moon's surface on a converted VTOL warcraft.
  - A search of Carlton Fisk's hotel room.
  - An interview and poker game with the manager of Io's most popular nightclub.
  - A visit to an Ionian miner's homestead.
- ⑤ The players put the pieces together to locate the evidence they need.
- ⑤ A final showdown occurs as agents of President Clark try to keep the players from escaping Io.

### Names and Places of Importance

- ⑤ Mount Jove: Location of the spaceport on Io
- ⑤ Taste of Earth: Restaurant on Mount Jove Station that reproduces an Earth-like atmosphere
- ⑤ Io Guided Tours: Tour agency that offers sightseeing flights over Io's surface

- ⑤ Nightmare Mines: Set of caves on Io which is now a tourist attraction
- ⑤ Four Corners: Zocalo-like set of shops on Mount Jove Station
- ⑤ Comm Centre: The only spot on the station where messages can be sent offworld
- ⑤ Deep Caves: Nightclub in the bowels of Mount Jove Station
- ⑤ Mount Olympus Tower: Ritzy hotel on Io
- ⑤ Grand Central Station: Central location where all transport tubes on Io meet
- ⑤ Carlton Fisk: Theresa Cross's former friend who disappeared on Io while investigating Santiago's death
- ⑤ Caitlin Schulz: New pilot of the pinnacle *Liberty's Fortune*
- ⑤ Malcolm McKearns: Scottish operator of Io Guided Tours
- ⑤ Eyes of Io: Two converted Frigga VTOL craft used for tours of Io's surface
- ⑤ Sheldon Pierce: Owner of the homestead closest to the crashed engine of EarthForce One
- ⑤ Marshall Pierce: Sheldon's son, killed in an 'accident' after trying to help Fisk's investigation
- ⑤ Mindy Ryszek: Very helpful receptionist at the Mount Olympus Tower hotel
- ⑤ James Weider: Guest at the Mount Olympus Tower who happens to be staying in Fisk's former room
- ⑤ Michael Seagate: Charming and personable manager of the Deep Caves nightclub
- ⑤ George Dessenz: Io Security chief and agent of President Clark
- ⑤ Corona Huygens: Telepath assigned to Io, also an agent of President Clark

The death of President Santiago threw IPX into confusion. Santiago believed in acquiring and mastering alien technologies for the benefit of Earth and its people, never for personal gain or power, and certainly not to turn the Alliance into a force capable of dominating other races. President Clark feels differently. He believes humans should come first in the galaxy, and sees all aliens as a danger. Naturally agents of the Shadows have fostered this belief, promising Clark what he wants in exchange for favours and, eventually, the kind of chaos and conflict they most desire.

As a result, Clark has changed the goals of IPX. As most readers are aware—but most Earth Alliance citizens, possibly including the players, are not—IPX is more than just an exploration firm. It is, in fact, a front for EarthForce's bioweapons and technology division. Items IPX collects are studied for use as weapons, or at the very least as a defence against attacks that employ similar devices. Most of the employees of IPX, including Theresa Cross, were brought



into the organisation with the stated goal of defending and strengthening Earth so that another Minbari War could never come to pass. They did not join the company so they could transform the Alliance into a Nazi-style regime bent on conquering the rest of the galaxy under the guise of 'national security'. This has led some IPX employees to resign their posts or enter early retirement...and some of the more vocal opponents of Clark's new orders have simply vanished.

Since the conclusion of Module One, Theresa Cross has begun to worry about the new direction her company is taking. One of her fellow agents, a man going by the name of Carlton Fisk, recently disappeared while on a fact-finding mission to Io. Theresa thought that perhaps he simply suffered from a bad turn of luck, but then she received a curious message from an unknown, untraceable location. The message was in code, using an old cipher she and Carlton had once used on a mission long ago. She decoded it to learn that it was, in fact, from Carlton. He told her in no uncertain terms that he had discovered wreckage of EarthForce One that included solid proof that the ship's explosion was no accident. Furthermore, he set up the coded message to be sent only in the event he did not return to his computer on schedule. Since he has not contacted her again since then, she is certain Carlton is dead.

The discovery that Santiago's death was an assassination has rocked Theresa's belief system to the core. She now questions her entire life's mission. She has spent many years helping IPX strengthen Earth's technology base and now it is all about to be subverted for truly evil purposes! Worse still, those among her contemporaries who are speaking out against the new directives are being forced out of the

company or possibly even killed. How can she fail to be worried and afraid?

The one thing she does not have is proof. Right now Theresa is wracked with doubts. A certain amount of paranoia comes with the territory in her job. Could this all be a mistake? Perhaps President Clark is taking drastic steps for a reason she does not understand. The coded message from Carlton could have been faked, or the evidence he supposedly discovered might be a plant. She just does not know.

Thus she contacts the players through her intermediary, Alison Fernandez. Alison herself has been given another reason to convince the players—Theresa promises to tell her the truth about her dismissal from the Diplomatic Corps. This data will be handed over upon the successful conclusion of the mission, but not before. Theresa will not give the information up because she suspects Alison will not be too happy about IPX once the truth comes out. However, if the report by Carlton Fisk is correct, Theresa intends to break from IPX and expects Alison to join her in the process. After all, after these revelations, they will both be united by a desire to oppose IPX and all it stands for.

**Suggested Level for This Module: 4-6 3<sup>rd</sup> level characters**

## Between Modules

Approximately a month and a half passes between Module One and Module Two. This gives the players a chance to undertake additional missions or side scenarios as needed. They might even advance in level, although this is not necessary. The events of Module One could be extended or may have other consequences depending on what paths the players take. Meanwhile Season Two continues, possibly drawing the group into other activities. Some possibilities are listed hereafter.

### Link to 'The Long Dark'

In this episode an alien creature of darkness is brought aboard Babylon 5 by mistake. Able to walk through walls and attack from invisibility, the beast begins killing random victims throughout the station. Most of the deaths appear to be taking place in Downbelow, especially in less inhabited areas close to power relays. The monster seems to attack only those who are alone and defenceless.

Security is naturally quite concerned about the beast and steps up patrols in the threatened areas. If the players are known to be troubleshooters on the 'good side' of Security, they are offered a bounty if they destroy the creature. Alternately, depending on the nature of the group, any of several other



## Shadow Beast

**Character Level:** 10 (40 hp)

**Initiative:** +8 (+4 Dex)

**Speed:** Fly 40 ft.

**Size:** Large (10 ft. space, 10 ft. reach)

**DV:** 18 (+8 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +10 melee (1d6 electrical, ignores all DR)

**Special Qualities:** Damage Resistance 15/energy and 5/–, Incorporeal, Immune to Electricity, Invisibility, Frightful Presence, Paralysis

**Saves:** Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 18, Con 24, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 16

**Skills:** Hide +14, Listen +10, Move Silently +14

**Feats:** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Lifesense

The Shadow Beast is a terrifying opponent because of its method of feeding and its ability to move through walls to attack any target. When attacking, the creature appears as a vaguely humanoid figure with a horned head floating within a coruscating nimbus of electricity. The monstrosity attacks by surrounding a target with energy, paralyzing it while it feeds upon the soft tissue within the victim's body. At full strength, the Shadow Beast can take on entire platoons of soldiers and win, but this one is still weak from years of travel through the void of space, and presently is taking care to attack only lone, defenceless targets.

If the Shadow Beast hits its target in melee, it attempts to envelop the victim, making an opposed grapple check with its opponent. The target uses its Dexterity bonus, not its Strength bonus, to resist the grapple check. If the grapple succeeds, the target is enveloped and cannot move from its square until it breaks free or the creature moves out of its reach zone. While enveloped, the victim is hit automatically each round by the beast's electrical attack and must make a Fortitude save (DC 16) or lose one point of Constitution. A victim whose Constitution is reduced to zero in this manner dies, his internal organs irrevocably absorbed by the Shadow Beast. The creature then retreats through any available wall, temporarily sated.

The Shadow Beast has the following traits:

**Damage Resistance:** A Shadow Beast is vulnerable only to energy attacks, such as from a PPG, but even these reduce damage by five points. All other attacks are affected by Damage Resistance 15.

**Incorporeal:** The Shadow Beast is incorporeal. Attacks against it miss 50% of the time.

**Immune to Electricity:** Electrical attacks score no damage upon the creature, and in fact restore its lost hit points on a one-for-one basis. This is one reason the beast remains close to power conduits, where it can retreat and heal itself over a short period of time.

**Invisibility:** If it gets into trouble or wishes to arrange an ambush, the Shadow Beast can become invisible. Each round of invisibility costs it one hit point of nonlethal damage. The creature cannot attack while invisible. Fading into or out of its invisible state requires a standard action.

**Frightful Presence:** The sight of the Shadow Beast is frightening indeed. All creatures must make a Will save (DC 10) or become frightened, fleeing the creature's visage for 1d6 rounds and being shaken for 1d6 rounds thereafter. If the save succeeds by four or less, the subject is shaken for 1d6 rounds instead. If the save is made by five or more, the subject is immune to that particular Shadow Beast's frightful presence thereafter.

**Paralysis:** Any hit from the Shadow Beast forces the victim to make a Fortitude save (DC 14) or be paralysed for 1d6 rounds. Additional rounds of paralysis from future attacks stack.



possibilities can be offered to get them into the act. One of the victims might have a rich relative looking for revenge. Ambassador G'Kar, already concerned about the movement of Shadows in the galaxy, suspects this may be one of their ilk, and will also want the creature destroyed. If any of the players are Narn, he will very likely ask them to look into the matter.

Basically, this side scenario centres around a hunt for the creature and an eventual battle that drives it off. The players probably will not have the firepower to kill it on their own; it is just too tough. Even if they do not win—and even if they do not actually encounter the beast—they might be present at the final attack that destroys it, as seen in the actual episode.

**DANGER:** *This scenario could alter the results of the episode 'The Long Dark' if the players slay the creature in the first encounter.*

Note: This side scenario could have significance later in the campaign. During Module Four, a creature similar to this one menaces a hidden Ranger camp in Narn space. If the players have fought this Shadow Beast, they will possess valuable experience that will aid them later on. Thus the Games Master should make every effort to involve the players in this particular encounter, even if they realistically have no chance of outright victory.

If the players interview both Security and medical personnel for news about the creature, they can easily learn that the creature seems capable of moving through solid walls and attacks using some form of natural electricity, and that when it is through, its victims have no internal organs left. Other

than that, very little is known. There are reports that it might be able to move invisibly. Although there are other people who are aware of it—Amis and Mariah Cirrus, for example—the players will not be told about these particular individuals. The only chance they have to hear about them is if they actually work in Security or Medlab. Even then, in the latter case Dr. Franklin will order the players to leave Mariah alone, as she has obviously been traumatised by her experience.

The first step in the hunt is to actually find the creature's hunting ground. This can be accomplished by studying the sites of the first several deaths (in the episode, only a couple of victims are shown, but the actual number of victims is more like eight). With this and a Knowledge (Babylon 5 sector) check (DC 20), a player recognises that most of the deaths are occurring near power transit nodes and are always single individuals.

Also, a Medical check (DC 17) on at least two of the victims shows that they were not killed instantly. Death occurred as the subject's internal organs were slowly drawn out of the still-living body over the course of about a minute. This should suggest that an ambush, with a single target set out as 'bait', is a likely possibility.

Should the players set out a lone target in the appropriate area and then withdraw to at least 100 feet away and out of sight, the creature will eventually attack. The beast simply flows out of one of the walls and sweeps over the target. The players must then drive it away before the unfortunate 'bait' is slain.

If the creature suffers at least 25 points of damage, it releases any victim it is holding and retreats through the nearest wall, using invisibility if it needs to in order to ensure its escape. Players attempting to track it with handheld sensor devices lose it within moments as its signature merges with power conduits closer to the reactor. Further searches track its movements fleetingly until it finally makes its final stand, assaulted by Security forces with heavy guns. The players can take part in this battle, firing as they arrive at the edge of the kill zone. Afterwards Captain Sheridan thanks them for their efforts, noting that the beast seemed somewhat shaken during the fight. The players may well have softened it up with the earlier fight.

Suggested experience for this scenario: 200

### Link to 'Soul Mates'

In this episode Ambassador Mollari's three wives arrive on the station and vie for his attention. Meanwhile Talia Winters, B5's resident telepath, meets her former husband Matthew



Stoner. Stoner claims to have been on an archaeological dig recently, during which he uncovered a number of Centauri artefacts. One of these, a carved wooden idol of some kind, is sold to a merchant and later bought by Mariel, one of Mollari's wives. When she gives the present to him as a gift, darts fly out of the idol's eyes and poison the Ambassador.

As it turns out, the planet where the idol was found was once a Narn colony that the Centauri conquered. Since there is no evidence or motive connecting Stoner to an assassination attempt on Mollari, the belief is that the idol was an ancient trap left by a long-dead Narn for Centauri long gone from their world. The touch of a Centauri on the idol's surface activated the darts. Yet the timing is awfully convenient. Did Stoner know about the trap and arrange to have it fall into the hands of Mollari's wife? If so, why? During the episode Ambassador G'Kar is seen tossing something small and unidentified to Mariel. Did he provide her with the means to arm the trap? If so, how did he find out about the artefact in the first place?

Garibaldi wants to know the answer to all these questions. His questioning of Stoner gets him nowhere and he does not have enough evidence to charge the man with any crime. Psi Corps also starts sending demands that Stoner be released—which of course is another clue that the former telepath is not what he appears to be. Garibaldi and Sheridan have both come to the conclusion that Stoner is actually an empath able to sense and manipulate the emotions of others. Of course he denies it and Psi Corps refuses to comment officially. Even Talia Winters, if interviewed, will neither confirm nor deny that empathy is even possible.

Thus, somewhat reluctantly, Garibaldi releases Stoner. He 'strongly suggests' that the man depart the station, but of course Stoner does not. Instead he goes right back to his quarters and holes up there. Garibaldi orders constant surveillance, but then a Security man following him gets a little overzealous and a fight results. Stoner complains to Sheridan, who is forced to order Garibaldi to leave Stoner alone.

Next Garibaldi calls in a little outside help—the players. He offers them each 200 credits if they help him out in this matter. This of course assumes he feels he can trust them at least a little bit. If the players have been a thorn in the side of Security, he will not use them unless they are his only choice, or unless he feels this is possibly a chance for them to redeem themselves. It is possible that a particularly roguish group will simply not qualify for this scenario.

When Garibaldi hands out the assignment, he turns over everything he knows about Stoner, including the fact that he is suspected to be an empath. Empaths, he explains, are more

## Matthew Stoner

**5<sup>th</sup> Level Human Telepath/4<sup>th</sup> Level Empath**

**Hit Points:** 17

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 14 (+4 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +5 melee or +8 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Empathy, Likeable +2, Project Emotions (Like, Friendship, Anger, Fear)

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 9, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 16

**Skills:** Concentration +16, Diplomacy +16, Intimidate +16, Sense Motive +18, Telepathy +16

**Feats:** Unflappable, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Rapid Shot

**Equipment:** Needler with eight tetrazzine darts

Matthew Stoner fancies himself an archaeologist, which is both a hobby and a convenient cover story. He is also still in love with Talia Winters and believes he can convince her to fall in love with him again, one way or another. Now that he has failed the first time, he has decided to try much more drastic measures. Perhaps after she has undergone the procedure and become an empath like himself, she will be able to forgive him.

For rules regarding the empath prestige class, see Appendix C.

of a rumour than anything else. Only Psi Corps really knows for sure if they exist and what their capabilities are. However, from observations of Stoner's activities, it is believed that he can sense emotions—at least surface ones—at a distance of maybe 20-30 feet and he can also alter emotions at the same range. However, the closer he gets to someone, the more effective he is. Garibaldi does not know if anything can block Stoner's abilities, so they might function through walls or pierce anti-telepath defences like a psi blocker helmet (see *The Fiery Trial*, p.43). The Security Chief highly recommends that the players keep their distance.

What he wants is for the players to shadow Stoner and see what he is up to. He does not want any violence if it can be avoided. However, if Stoner commits a crime, he authorises the players to make an arrest using any reasonable force. Since Stoner is an empath, they will have to subdue him from a distance. If Stoner gets close enough he could make the players fight each other or become his best friends—whatever he wants. With that in mind, Garibaldi tells the players where Stoner is staying—Red Sector, room 328, a high-class extended stay suite. After that they are on their own.





How the players take this job depends entirely on the makeup of the party and what skills they have available. Here are some things they might try:

**Shadowing Stoner:** This is harder than it sounds, because they need to stay at least 30 feet away. If Stoner gets a whiff of their emotions, he will be able to sense that they are up to something. This will mean that any time he goes to the Zocalo, a casino or anyplace else with lots of people, the players will have to make Spot checks to keep an eye on him.

**Planting Bugs:** If the players wait until Stoner leaves, they can break into his suite and install listening devices and cameras. All the suites have security systems and complex electronic door locks. Getting in requires a Technical (electronics) check (DC 20), and bypassing the security alarm requires a Technical (electronics) check (DC 25). However, if they blow this roll and set off the alarm, it will not matter because Garibaldi has informed his staff not to investigate any alarms from this particular room. Now wasn't that nice of him? The players can also get him to hand over a key to the room if they succeed on a Diplomacy check (DC 18) or if he owes them a favour.

**Searching His Room:** If the players search they find some luggage and clothes, a few personal effects and a locked box that can only be opened with Stoner's handprint. Anyone making an Appraise check (DC 10) on this box knows it is a DNA-encoded lock that is very difficult to break. Furthermore it is designed so that its internal sensors detect anyone trying to bypass the lock, so Stoner will be aware that somebody

tried to break into it. The players can of course steal the box if they wish, or try to break in anyway. Inside they find a needler and a set of eight tetrazzine darts. This particular custom-designed needler has a cartridge into which all eight darts can be fitted, as though in a magazine.

**Interviewing Others:** Stoner will occasionally talk to other people, make purchases, play casino games and buy drinks. Once, he goes back to his room with a female companion. The players can interview these people if they wish, but all they learn is that the individual in question believes Stoner is a nice, pleasant chap who seems eminently likeable. The female friend also thinks he was great in the sack and she enjoyed herself immensely, but has no intention of pursuing him further. She knows it was just a one-night stand. No one the players interview provides anything useful.

**Other:** The players may come up with other ideas. Allow them to get creative, as long as they do not get too close to Stoner. If they do and he senses their apprehension, he will become suspicious and approach them quickly, using his empathic powers to convince them to be his friend (this works particularly well if one of the players is a human woman). Over drinks, he will get them to spill their guts about what is going on and Stoner will be able to elude them later on.

On the first day of surveillance, Stoner buys a couple of meals, visits a casino, sees a couple of shows and goes to the Zocalo. While in the latter place he sits down alone in the Dug Out bar and has a drink. About ten minutes later Talia Winters enters the bar and meets with a client on the opposite side of the room. Stoner does not move, but he watches her out of the corner of his eye. Any players observing him at this moment will notice the arrival of Talia Winters only on a Spot check (DC 20), although if they do not know what she looks like this will not mean anything. Discerning that he is surreptitiously watching someone requires a Spot check (DC 15). When Talia gets up and leaves ten minutes later, Stoner keeps his back to her, a fact the players will notice if they have observed that he is keeping an eye on her. He does not make any attempt to follow though, and a few minutes later he goes back to his quarters.

If the players have planted bugs in his room, they will get very bored watching him. He reads a lot and watches some video programming before retiring for the night. On the morning of the second day, however, he makes a single call that results in a series of glowing lights and some high-pitched noises. Stoner stares at this for several minutes before saying 'I understand' and shutting off the connection.

Next he goes to his cabinet, opens the DNA-encoded box and removes and arms the needler. Concealing this in his jacket, he leaves his cabin and makes a beeline for the Zocalo. Here

he returns to the same bar, sits down and waits. He knows that this is a favourite meeting place for Talia when she performs various telepathic duties on the station and thanks to some earlier legwork he knows her schedule well. He waits for her meeting to finish and then, as she gets up to leave, approaches and tells her he has something she needs to see. After this he leads her towards the docking bay, using his powers to ensure her cooperation. He intends to spirit her off of Babylon 5 and return her to Psi Corps against her will, so that she will undertake the same procedure he did.

Presumably the players are keeping an eye on him and can intervene. As they enter the docking bay, he moves towards a shuttle, taking Talia along with him. By now she appears glassy-eyed, as though in a trance. If the players do not act while he is in the open, their only choice will be to storm the shuttle, where they will be in close quarters and Stoner can use his powers easily.

If the players challenge Stoner, he quietly orders Talia to stay in front of him—like a human shield, although he does not say that part out loud. Talia moves on his initiative and keeps herself in between Stoner and the players as he moves towards them, hands out and open. The needler remains concealed at this point, while he tries to get close to somebody—running if he must. He does not know the players are aware of his powers and does not expect them to shoot him. Should they attempt to do so, he draws the needler and opens fire, constantly attempting to get close enough to use his empathic powers. Should he gain control over a player, he gets them to help him and then moves on to the next one. He does not want to kill anyone but will do so if he must.

If the players win, Stoner is arrested and the players are given their reward. However, despite testimonies to the contrary, Talia insists she was going with him of her own free will. He was not taking her to Earth; he just wanted to show her something in the shuttle. That is what she testifies to in court. Thus the only conviction that can be pinned on Stoner is possession of a concealed weapon. That is enough to get him expelled from the station though, and he departs in disgust.

Should Stoner win, he puts Talia on the shuttle and leaves Babylon 5 with her, heading back to Earth. This could lead to additional work for the players—they might have to go after the two of them, assuming they have transport available. If they do not go after Talia, she returns two weeks later, unchanged, and does not want to talk about anything that happened on the trip. However, she does say that Matthew Stoner will not be a problem any more.

Suggested experience for this scenario: 200 (none if Stoner gets away with Talia)

## Civilian Pinnacle

These small vessels are relatively common and inexpensive, but are rarely seen in the hands of individuals due to licencing and registration restrictions. Instead they are operated by corporations, privately funded research groups and the like. A pinnacle can support a crew of up to nine individuals, although only one pilot is actually needed. They are not armed and cannot open their own jump points, so they are limited exclusively to established travel routes. In a pinch they can move a few metric tonnes of cargo if all passenger space is excluded, although this is inefficient considering their relatively slow speed.

Huge Spacecraft; hp 45; DV 9 (-2 size, +1 agility); DR 6; Spd 20; Acc 1; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +1; Stealth 13; SQ Atmospheric Capable; Cargo 3,000lb.; 1 pilot, 8 passengers; Cost 7,500,000 cr.

## Encounter One: Private Meeting

One day, while the players are going about their business on the station, each receives an individual message. If they have quarters the message arrives on their terminal. Otherwise it is delivered by a courier who hands over a sealed envelope before departing.

The message is the same for everyone: 'This is Alison Fernandez. I need you to all meet me in docking port A-16 at 2100 hours tonight. Bring your gear for an extended journey. I'll explain everything when you get there, but if you don't think you can be away from the station for at least two weeks, don't bother showing up.'

When the players arrive at that docking port they find a civilian pinnacle there. If they were involved in the events of *The Fiery Trial*, this is a familiar enough vessel—it is the *Liberty's Fortune*, the same ship used by the group in previous modules. Inside, Alison Fernandez awaits, along with a pilot by the name of Caitlin Schultz (see the Appendix for stats).

Alison explains that she intends to take off within the next few minutes on an urgent mission. The players are invited to join her if they wish, and she will explain along the way. She cannot tell them anything at first unless they commit, however, because she does not want any word of her mission lingering around on Babylon 5. No matter how hard the players try to get more information out of her, she will not reveal it, unless of course they use telepathy or some other means. She also will not let them leave the shuttle to fetch more supplies, since she originally warned them that they needed to bring all the gear they needed. She needs their



answer immediately, because she intends to take off within minutes.

If the players agree, she has Caitlin close up the ship and take off. As soon as the ship clears Babylon 5's docking ports, it heads straight for the jump gate and enters. Once they are in hyperspace, Alison explains the mission as she knows it.

*Alison sits down alongside the rest of you and starts to explain the situation. Her expression is grave as she proceeds. 'Theresa Cross came to me several days ago and told me something that frankly scares the hell out of me. She said she believes that President Santiago's death wasn't an accident. She thinks he was assassinated.'*

*Alison pauses for a moment to let that sink in and then continues. 'Apparently, one of Theresa's fellow scientists, someone named Carlton Fisk, was conducting a secret investigation on Io and came across wreckage of EarthForce One. Somehow, this wreckage proved the ship's explosion wasn't an accident. Theresa doesn't know where the proof comes from because Fisk didn't send any more messages and has since disappeared.'*

*'Anyway, Theresa is worried because she's afraid if she tells her employers about this, the same thing that happened to Fisk could happen to her. She doesn't know if they had something to do with the assassination, or if they're just totally in President Clark's pocket now. Before she makes any decisions, she needs to know if Fisk's report was accurate. That's why she asked me to look into this quietly. We're going to Io.'*

Naturally the players will have questions.

**'What exactly are we looking for on Io?'** 'Two things—Fisk and the evidence he supposedly found. Io Colony, as you know, is a collection of homesteads and domes involved almost exclusively in mining efforts. The only place to land is at Mount Jove, which is where Fisk was staying. We know he set out on several missions across the surface of the planet and presumably during one of these he discovered the evidence he reported to Theresa. We're hoping he left behind some kind of records we can look at when we get there.'

**'Why do you need us for this? Why not someone closer to Earth?'** 'Theresa doesn't know who she can trust but she knows you're the least likely to be working for the other side or to report her activities to someone else.'

**'What do you know about Carlton Fisk?'** 'Just what Theresa gave me.' She hands over a photo of Fisk, who looks like a middle-aged man starting to turn bald. 'For reasons of her own, she's keeping the name of their employer a secret. All I know for sure is that he's an agent, like she

is. However, he wasn't acting in an official capacity on Io. He was there for personal reasons and supposedly stumbled upon the evidence by accident. I have to tell you, though, I'm not buying that. People just don't go to Io for a vacation. He must've been looking for something and he obviously found it.'

**'Is there a chance this is all a deception of some kind?'**

'Yes, which is why we're going. We need to find out if Fisk was correct. He sent a coded message to Theresa, using a code the two of them knew well, but others might've known it also. There's also a chance he was interrogated or forced to send the message against his will. We don't know. I have to ask myself, though—why would somebody go to so much trouble to convince Theresa Cross that President Santiago was assassinated? It doesn't make sense.'

**'Who's our new pilot?'** 'Caitlin Schultz. I've worked with her before and she checks out. However, she doesn't know the true nature of our mission. She thinks we're going to Io simply to try to find Carlton Fisk. Don't talk to her about anything else. Once we land, she'll stay with the ship, so there's no reason to worry about another betrayal.' Alison is of course referring to Rasheed Isanda's actions at the end of *The Fiery Trial*.

**'What's in it for us?'** 'Well, in addition to learning what happened to President Santiago, Theresa has agreed to pay you all 1,000 credits. That's each, not for your whole group! Plus you get a lovely all-expenses paid trip to Io, the garden spot of the Sol system.' At this she gives a quick laugh. 'Oh, and I get something else for myself, too. Theresa says she's managed to discover the truth behind my dismissal from the Diplomatic Corps. If we can provide evidence of Santiago's assassination to her—and keep quiet about it in the process—she's agreed to give me full disclosure. At last, I'll finally know what really happened!'

## Io Colony

Earth's colony on Io began life as a small military base established in 2132 to help EarthForce patrol the outer planets in search of pirates. The initial Io base was placed in a synchronous orbit behind Io that kept the station free of Jupiter's intense magnetic fields. Later, as protective technologies improved, the base was located directly on the surface of the moon, atop a stable, non-volcanic mountain.

Io, one of the most violent moons in the Solar System, is a tremendous source of sulphur, silicates and other valuable minerals, many of which are readily available on the surface. It was not long before belters began to brave the earthquakes, molten sulphur flows, intense magnetic fields and electromagnetic disturbances to collect these resources. Since Io always keeps one side facing Jupiter and the other towards space, most belters stayed on the outward-facing side

to avoid the giant planet's constant output of radiation. Even so, residents of the slowly growing colony gradually became used to an almost constant electrical charge on everything they touched. Io's low gravity also proved something of a challenge, but long-time residents found themselves slowly adapting to their environment.

Today Io Colony is a collection of dozens of small domed villages positioned atop hills and mountains considered generally safe from volcanic activity. The domes are reinforced against impacts from meteorites and chunks of rock thrown up by nearby eruptions. Floors and transit tubes are made of flexible materials designed to withstand the constant shocks of eruptions and the slight twisting and stretching of Io's surface by massive tidal forces caused by Jupiter, Ganymede and other Jovian moons. Most residents wear protective gear at all times and have helmets at the ready, just in case a seal is breached despite all the colony's safety precautions.

Life on Io is difficult, harsh and stressful. Nearly all civilians are miners who spend the majority of their time engaged in heavy labour. Of course, since the gravity is only one-sixth that of Earth they can lift a great deal more than they could back home, but their jobs are still exhausting. All the 'free' resources on the surface have by now been stripped away, so the miners are constantly scraping around in a search for new veins to exploit. Digging, tunnelling and drilling are performed on a regular basis but are quite dangerous. The worst nightmare for an Ionian is to accidentally break into a buried volcanic fissure and release molten sulphur or lava directly into the homestead. For this reason most drilling is done remotely and with explosives ready to collapse the tunnel before too much damage is caused. Explosives are not generally used to excavate the land, however, lest they set off an eruption or an earthquake chain reaction.

Io still supports the original military base, which occupies the top of Mount Jove, overlooking the colony like a huge natural tower. The base supports a significant military population as well as rescue workers ready to evacuate miners at a moment's notice. The main job of the base is not to oversee the colony, however, but to guard the nearby Io jump gate, Earth's primary civilian entry point into hyperspace. Literally hundreds of spacecraft pass through this gate on a daily basis, and since the transit time to Earth via normal space is several hours, the defenders must be housed somewhere nearby. Io Station is the largest nearby base of any significance.

## Encounter Two: Mount Jove

The flight to Earth takes three days, during which the players can relax, read up on Io or otherwise prepare for the mission

in whatever way they see fit. They can also catch up with Alison and talk to Caitlin, who is a friendly and outgoing sort. Otherwise nothing interesting happens.

Eventually the *Liberty's Fortune* emerges from the Io jump gate. Caitlin takes the ship down to Mount Jove, landing there without challenge on the civilian side of the mountain. The base is divided into two sections, the vast majority of which is military in nature and cannot be entered by anyone without the proper clearance. The rest is a civilian docking port acting as a nerve centre for the transport tubes that service the rest of the colony.

After the ship docks, Alison escorts the players off the ship and into the customs area. If the players are all human they have no trouble getting through. Other races are interrogated closely, scanned and warned not to cause any trouble. Minbari in particular are treated roughly. Io Colony is almost 100% human, except for a few vendors and a single distant homestead with a single Narn resident. The inhabitants do not like foreigners or aliens very much.

*As soon as you complete the customs check-in procedure, you are allowed to pass through the large hallway into the main body of the Mount Jove Station. You are immediately struck by the similarities to the inside of Babylon 5. Halls and passageways head off in a variety of directions, and humans of all shapes and sizes walk past. A few give you curious glances, and eyes narrow at the sight of the aliens in your party. No one speaks to you though, and the citizens pass you by without comment. As though to remind you that you are no longer on Babylon 5, you see a wide window along one wall, looking out over the moon's sulphur-coated hills. High above, the orange and white orb of Jupiter hangs over the landscape, dominating the sky.*

*Welcome to Io.*

After this the players are free to do whatever they wish. Caitlin stays on the ship, while Alison accompanies the players. Alison admits that she has never been to Io Colony before and knows about as much as the players do. New arrivals on the base receive a map of the facility and a brief description of the various places the station has to offer. Some places the players can visit are listed below:

**The Low Gravity Acclimatization Centre:** This is a large gymnasium with padded walls and a variety of obstacles like walls, balance beams and the like. Here the players can get used to Io's low gravity in complete safety. If a player spends at least one hour in the Acclimatization Centre each day he reduces the Very Low Gravity penalty to Dexterity by one-half (i.e. to -2 for most players, or -1 if they have the Low-G Tolerance feat). This benefit only applies for the next eight hours and must be renewed regularly.



**The Taste of Earth Restaurant:** This popular establishment is shaped like a dome, with a false sky projected on the ceiling. During the day, a false sun creeps across through puffy white clouds. At night a clear starfield with the Earth's moon appears, lacking any hint of the oppressive sight of colourful Jupiter hanging overhead. The periods of sunset and dawn are most popular, usually filling the restaurant with residents of the base—including many military types coming over for the event. Some of the homesteaders also make the trip to Mount Jove on occasion to enjoy a good meal under Earth's blue skies. Prices are high—at least twice those on Babylon 5—but this is the best restaurant on Io. In addition to quality meals made from pre-packaged ingredients, some authentic gourmet foods are also available if the buyer does not mind paying ridiculous prices.

**Io Guided Tours:** Although Io is not exactly a huge tourist draw, several small businesses have sprouted within the last three years. One of these is Io Guided Tours, or IGT for short. IGT is operated by Malcolm McKearns and three other employees. McKearns is an ex-EarthForce pilot who has purchased two decommissioned EA Frigga VTOL craft and converted them for sightseeing purposes. Each operates with a crew of two and can carry up to a dozen passengers who, seated in converted troop bays, can look down at the surface of Io through clear panels. The two craft, known as the 'Eyes of Io', are able to sail through canyons and over bubbling volcanoes with the greatest of ease. The tours are very popular with visitors and receive glowing recommendations from virtually every resident of the station. However, they cost 100 credits per person for a one-hour tour, or 200 credits for the 'Grand Volcano Tour' lasting three hours. Malcolm McKearns is quite proud of his accident-free record, as well as the fact that he has been involved in three different (and successful) rescue missions since his company was formed.

**The Nightmare Mines:** This is another tourist attraction to which tours are available. The so-called Nightmare Mines are played up as haunted by the ghosts of twenty-seven miners who lost their lives over the years the tunnels were dug. However, to most locals, the place is a laughable tourist trap similar to those you see advertised on billboards and in the backs of cheesy magazines. Visitors travel by transport tube to the Wexton homestead on the outskirts of Io Colony. The Wexton was one of the earliest civilian homesteads on Io and later served as a staging area for deep mining in the so-called Nightmare Caves. Now it is a museum and gift shop. From here visitors can put on pressure suits and venture forth on guided tours into the caves, listening to stories about accidents and mysterious sightings within the empty mines. It is all pure hokum, but just about every visitor to Io Colony heads out that way at least once, and the place does a decent enough business. Lately they have managed to increase profits by adding a side trip to a spot where part of

the wreckage of President Santiago's ship crashed after the disaster. For an extra 20 credits a land crawler takes tourists out to look at the furrow and crater created by the wreck. However, no trace remains of the pieces, the remainder having been carted off by officials from the nearby military base. All that stands there now is a memorial to Santiago consisting of an EA flag placed over a rock carved in the shape of a star.

**The Four Corners:** At the centre of the Mount Jove civilian base lies the Four Corners, a mall of stores and shops rivalling the Zocalo of Babylon 5. Here visitors can relax in cafes, shop for clothing or other conveniences, purchase equipment and tools and even take care of banking needs. Commerce here is oriented about half-and-half between the needs of the adjoining military base and those of the more distant homesteads outside the station. Here in the Four Corners the players can acquire any reasonable kinds of supplies, such as those that would be available in any civilian shop. Nothing illegal is available and if there is a black market on Mount Jove, it is much better hidden than this.

**Comm Centre:** On Io Colony communication is limited. There are no communications kiosks and individual rooms do not have video connections. The Comm Centre is a combination communications and entertainment facility where an individual can place calls to any settlement in the colony as well as to more distant places such as Earth or Babylon 5. However, more distant calls can only be made twice per day, between the hours of 0200 and 0300 or between 1400 and 1500. This is due to interference caused by Jupiter's massive radiation belts. The Comm Centre also provides private areas in which customers can purchase and watch three-D entertainment programs, a luxury not available on base or in most homesteads. These sites are very popular distractions from the other problems of life on Io.

**The Deep Caves:** Not a series of tunnels, this is actually a nightclub located on the lowest level of Mount Jove. Most of those who visit this place are members of the military looking for a little excitement when they are off duty. Here a visitor can enjoy a wide variety of drinks, play card games, participate in low-G darts tournaments or try dancing on the fully enclosed quad-level dance floor. In the back rooms certain less reputable forms of entertainment can be found—stripteases, prostitution, drug trafficking and so forth. Actually, prostitution is not illegal on Io as long as the employees are property licenced and certified and the Deep Caves pays its taxes. Drug use, however, is strictly against the law—but the Caves pays kickbacks to corrupt EarthGov officials to keep the supplies flowing.

**Mount Olympus Tower:** This is the primary hotel on Mount Jove, a high-class place extending thirty stories into the

black Io sky. A series of rollers and vibration baffles keeps the building perfectly stable even during severe earthquakes. Rooms range from small, affordable suites with one bed and community facilities (water is a carefully managed resource on Io) to expensive penthouses large enough for the entire group. Even the top-of-the-line spots, with simply amazing views, offer surprisingly few amenities and no communications ports. One might as well be back in the Twentieth Century.

**Grand Central Station:** The hub of transport tube activity on Io lies athwart the main base and the civilian section. From here a traveller can get anywhere on Io by simply hopping aboard a transport and programming the appropriate destination. However, the vast majority of the homesteads in the colony are private, meaning a transport will not go to those sites without permission from the owner. A visitor will need to make a Technical (mechanical) check (DC 20) to remove the protections and visit a homestead uninvited. Doing so, however, will get the offender arrested.

**Naval Base:** About 75% of Mount Jove is a naval base dedicated to the defence of the Io jump point. Players without some sort of military connection will not be able to enter this side of the station. A player with officer levels will only be able to get in if he has a good cover story and a pressing reason to be allowed past the security checkpoint. Even if the players do manage to achieve entry, there is not much to do. Carlton Fisk was not in the military and did not make any contacts within the base. About the only thing a military player can do from the naval facility is call his superiors on Babylon 5 and elsewhere and provide a status report.

**Other:** There are also numerous other small shops, restaurants, lower-class hotels, hospitals, water reclamation facilities and so forth; the above list only shows the highlights. All in all, the entire base supports a population of about 35,000 people, with another 100,000 scattered across the surface of Io.

At this point let the players explore the base as they will. They can practice in the zero-G gym, check out the entertainment facilities, get rooms in the hotel, go shopping at the Four Corners or do whatever else they feel they need to do. When they are ready they can move on to the mission at hand.

## Earthquakes on Io

Every couple of hours, an earthquake rocks Io's surface. The first occasion comes as the players are standing around discussing how to get started on their mission or, if they decide quickly, as they are moving towards their first destination. Read this bit of boxed text:

*As you are standing there (or walking along), a sudden shaking under your feet startles you. The ground seems to buck and pitch like a ship on rough seas. It is an earthquake!*

## Electrical Activity on Io

In addition to earthquakes, Io is constantly under the effects of Jupiter's massive radiation belts. The equipment that protects the colony from this radiation instead produces a constant low-level electrical field, producing a kind of hair-raising static on all residents. Touching anything metallic results in a shock, so virtually all metal surfaces are grounded and anyone entering an area with flammable substances is required to pass through a 'degaussing portal' designed to strip out any excess electricity collected on the body while walking.

Even this is not enough to prevent rampant electrical charges from taking their toll. Once a player has been on Io for more than an hour, he suffers one point of nonlethal damage that cannot be recovered until he rests. Certain luxury hotel rooms are shielded against the effect, but everyone else on Io just learns to live with it. An individual who has been on Io for at least one month is immune to this penalty, as is any player with the Electrical Tolerance feat.

At this point anyone failing a Balance check (DC 10) falls prone and must remain there until the quake subsides.

*As you grab for support you notice that most of the locals are standing idly with knees slightly bent, arms out for balance. None of them fall, although some are forced to drop or set down whatever they are carrying. Although the quake seems violent, you do not hear any crunching or crashing, and when the shuddering goes away a minute later, everyone continues along without any problems. A couple of the natives do, however, chuckle at the difficulties you all had.*

All the buildings, stores, shops, decorations and the like on Io are by necessity fastened carefully and constructed to withstand quakes up to 10.5 on the Richter scale. Wall and window seals are rated for quakes of up to a 12.0 rating. Fortunately most of these events are short-term and weak, lasting no more than a minute and rarely exceeding 8.0 in power. Admittedly this would be extremely dangerous on an Earthlike world, but on Io—where the gravity is much lighter—an 8.0 quake is not that serious.

A quake hits on average once every two hours. When one does occur, it lasts for 2d6 rounds and forces a Balance check (DC 10) every round. Failure indicates the subject falls prone and must remain down for the rest of the quake. If the individual in question has experienced at least one day's worth of earthquakes already, he can attempt to get to his feet with a Balance check (DC 15). Doing so is a move action, but if he fails he loses all other actions that round. In any case, falling prone as a result of an earthquake causes no appreciable damage.



While a quake is going on, all ability scores, skill checks (other than Balance checks made to avoid falling prone), ability checks and Reflex saving throws suffer a -2 circumstance penalty. This does not apply if the individual is not standing on the ground, so someone in an aircraft sailing over the surface of Io will not even notice the earthquake. Jumping into the air during a quake does not remove these effects.

Rarely, a quake is rougher, lasting 1d6 extra rounds and increasing all Balance check DCs by 1d6. Whenever the Games Master determines that a quake occurs, roll 1d10. On a 1 the quake is severe enough to use these alternate rules.

In general an earthquake does not affect anything indoors unless an object is left in a position where a quake can damage it. All structures and vehicles on Io are designed to absorb earthquakes without any trouble. If the players are outside or in an underground natural cave, the quake seems stronger because there is no high-tech baffle system underneath to absorb some of the shock. Additionally, the individual will have to be wearing a bulky spacesuit to survive in the nearly airless conditions. Thus, falling under such circumstances produces one point of nonlethal damage. In a cave or tunnel, there is also a slim possibility that some sort of cave-in will result. The effects of this are totally up to the Games Master.

### So What *Did* Happen to Mr. Fisk?

Carlton Fisk came to Io on his own initiative about a month ago. He checked into the Mount Olympus Tower, room 701, and paid for a week in advance. He did a few tourist things, such as a visit to the Nightmare Mines and an Io Guided Tour. He also spent a lot of time talking to locals and hanging out in the Deep Caves nightclub, even partaking of some of the borderline illegal occurrences behind closed doors. His goal was to discover what he could about the wreckage of EarthForce One that fell on the moon after the explosion, as well as the activities that took place thereafter.

Over the course of his investigations Fisk learned that two pieces of wreckage landed on Io that were not collected by EarthForce, despite the fact that most of the miners are aware of the pieces' existence and even reported them to the authorities. The truth is that President Clark gave a direct order to leave all engine pieces where they fell. He claimed that this was because the 'black box' had already been recovered. Analysis of the recordings had already 'proved' that the explosion was an accident caused by a cracked fusion bottle, so there was no need to waste equipment and risk lives trying to haul off the massive engine blocks. Actually he assumed that they would be quickly buried by Io's volcanic activity, and even secretly directed some of his agents to set explosives designed to cover up the evidence. Then he left

a couple of agents behind to ensure nobody investigated the remaining wreckage too closely.

Following Fisk's discovery that chunks of EarthForce One were still on Io, he needed a way to get to them. The natural choice was Malcolm McKearns' Guided Tours and the 'Eyes of Io'. Approaching them on a day when he knew they had no tours scheduled, he offered a hefty sum to fly him to one of the engine pieces. Here he disembarked and spent two hours searching the wreckage. Finding nothing there, Fisk had McKearns fly him to the other engine piece, but found it lodged within a deep crevasse and unreachable. It was, however, very close to a homestead owned by the Pierce family.

After investigating the Pierces, Fisk learned they were descendants of three generations of Io miners. He tried to convince them to let him visit their mine and borrow one of their vehicles—a core miner—but they refused. Fisk then checked out two other homesteads nearby, but found they lacked the necessary tools and equipment to help him reach the engine piece. This forced him to return to the Pierce family. Investigating them closely, he learned that one of them, Marshall Pierce, spent a lot of time in the Taste of Earth Restaurant and watching vids in the Comm Centre. Fisk correctly divined that the young man was sick of the life of a miner and would do just about anything to escape Io. Carlton arranged an 'accidental' meeting and proposed a deal: In exchange for a trip to the wrecked engine, Fisk would help the desperate miner get away from Io and start a new life on Earth. Pierce leapt at the opportunity.

Unfortunately the rest of the Pierce family was not too keen on the idea. They did not want their foolish young son heading off to an unknown future on a planet none of them had ever visited. First they tried to buy Fisk off, but of course Carlton had no interest in money. He just wanted to investigate the wreckage. Finally the Pierces acquiesced to his demands and let him head off with Marshall on the core mining machine, a journey that took several hours. However, they also called Io Security and explained what was going on.

This brought the whole incident to the attention of the two agents of President Clark, who were by now insinuated amidst the Io Security forces. Taking a team out to the wreckage, they tried to arrest Fisk. By now, however, he had discovered the evidence he needed—parts of an explosive deep within the tangled engine wreckage, as well as one unexploded chunk of bomb debris. Fisk took video images and an explosive sample and returned to the core miner, only to find Security forces waiting for him atop the crevasse. Desperate, he forced Marshall to drive the miner back into the crack in Io's surface, whereupon the vehicle broke through into a

natural set of caves. Pierce followed this as close as he could to the Pierce homestead and tunnelled into his father's mine, from which he returned home, where Security forces were already approaching.

Thanking the Pierces for their unwitting help, Fisk hurried to the transport tube and high-tailed it back to Mount Jove, from which he managed to send Theresa Cross a coded message before Clark's agents caught up with him. He hid the evidence he had collected within the Comm Centre kiosk he was using (booth #102) and returned to his room in the hopes of playing innocent. Unfortunately the agents were not too kind to him when they got there, beating him up and hauling him away after a brief attempt at interrogation. Prior to their arrival, however, Fisk left a few innocuous clues in his room.

Unfortunately for the agents, they could not prevent Fisk from killing himself with a suicide drug before Clark's telepaths could get to work on learning what he knew. They also are not sure Fisk ever actually sent a message out of the station, or what he did with the evidence he took from the engine crash site. Since they could not afford to leave Marshall Pierce where he was without his story getting out, they took him into custody and then arranged for his tragic death in a transit tube accident on his way back home after his release. After that they placed explosives near the engine wreckage, setting off a blast that buried the pieces under tons of rock.

Now it is up to the players to figure all of this out, locate the evidence, elude or fight President Clark's agents and escape Io with the information intact. To this end the players can try several things, represented as separate encounters below. Encounters Three, Four and Five do not have to be run in that order, but the evidence gained in any or all of them will point the way to the Pierce homestead and, eventually, the important wreckage.

## Encounter Three: The Tower

One of the first and most obvious places to look for evidence of Fisk's presence is the Mount Olympus Tower. While on Io Carlton stayed in room 701, one of the nicer corner suites but not a penthouse spot. There are two ways to find this out—getting a room in the hotel and hacking the reservation computers, or interviewing someone at the reservations desk. Hacking requires a Computer Use check (DC 15), but if the players do not beat the roll by at least ten, their activities will be detected and they will be summarily ejected from their rooms. Furthermore the infraction will be reported to Io Security, so that any further trouble gets them arrested.

### Mindy Ryszek

2<sup>nd</sup> Level Human Worker

**Hit Points:** 8

**Initiative:** +0 (+0 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 10 (+0 Reflex)

**Attacks:** -1 melee or +1 ranged

**Special Qualities:** White Collar

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 7, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 18

**Skills:** Appraise +6, Bluff +9, Computer Use +6, Knowledge (local) +6, Listen +5, Perform (dance) +9, Profession (retail) +5, Spot +5, Technical (electronics) +6

**Feats:** Hobby (Perform), Low-G Tolerance

**Equipment:** Hotel uniform, skimpy dancing outfit

Mindy is a smart, vivacious 20-year-old who is now in her fourth year stuck on 'this boring rock.' Although her father, Major Karl Ryszek, would gladly ship her to any college in the Alliance, she does not want to go to school. She wants to marry a rich, exciting man who will spirit her away from Io and into a life of adventure. Failing that, she will be more than happy to link up with anyone who seems remotely interesting and an attractive player from somewhere else—anywhere else—surely fits the bill. As a result she will try to 'put the moves on' any male human who approaches her asking for information. Should that fortunate (or unfortunate, depending on how you look at it) individual need a favour, she will oblige in exchange for a night of fun and excitement at the Deep Caves nightclub. She will even agree to show the player around Io, using her local knowledge as necessary, but only so long as the guy strings her along. If she is ever rejected she becomes an implacable enemy thereafter.

If the players try to get the information from a reservation desk attendant, they find a lovely young woman in a sharp business suit. Her nametag identifies her as Mindy (her last name is Ryszek, but this is not on the tag). She is the daughter of a Russian EarthForce officer assigned to the military base. She works at the hotel to earn extra money so she can party every night in the Deep Caves. If a reasonably attractive male human player approaches and asks for her help, she will eventually agree to tell them Fisk's room number if he meets her for drinks later in the nightclub. If an appropriate player archetype is not available (she does not go for females or aliens, although a good-looking Centauri might be interesting), it will take a Diplomacy check (DC 20) to get her to look the information up. Bluff or Intimidate can also



be tried but require a DC 25 check—failure indicates that she calls her supervisor and the players are sent packing.

Once the players have the appropriate room number in hand, their next step should be to proceed there and check it out. If they hacked into the computer to get the room number, a second Computer Use check (DC 10) will reveal that a man named James Weider is staying in room 701 at the moment. They can also get this information from Mindy on a Diplomacy check (DC 15) or by promising to buy the first round of drinks at the Deep Caves. Getting the keycode for entry into the room requires a virtually impossible Computer Use check (DC 30), a Diplomacy check (DC 25) on Mindy, or showing her a *really* good time at the nightclub (wink wink, nudge nudge). The players can also simply break into the room, but the Mount Olympus Tower has a state-of-the-art security system. Getting through a locked door requires a Technical (mechanical) check (DC 22); failure by five or more alerts hotel security to their presence and lands the offenders in jail (see Encounter Six).

## Vapour

Vapour is an uncommon party drug that causes anyone drinking it to gain enhanced awareness while lowering inhibitions (Int +2, Wis -4) for 1d4 hours. Users refer to this as the 'vapour high.' The drug is quite illegal and can cause hallucinations. Upon drinking a dose a subject must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer not only the ability score adjustments but also strange visions and dementia. An affected victim rolls 1d3 every minute—on a 1 he acts normally, while on a 2 or 3 he wanders around in a daze, staring at images only he can see, utterly unable to interact with the world around him.

Vapour is illegal and possession of the substance results in immediate arrest. However, because of its chemical composition, most drug-sniffing animals or equipment cannot detect the drug. A single dose sells for up to 100 credits on the black market, depending on supply and demand.

If the players attempt to identify the drug they must make a Medical check to recognise it as a mood-altering substance. If their roll equals or exceeds DC 15, they know it is capable of producing clarity of thought, but that is about it. DC 20 tells them it will also lower inhibitions, much like alcohol only without perceptible side effects. Only if the check hits DC 25 will they recognise the substance as Vapour and realise it is also a hallucinogen.

The room is occupied by James Weider, a somewhat portly businessman from Earth arranging the purchase of a number of rare materials for his company, JSR Imports. He has been to Io several times and spends most of the day in the Comm Centre making deals with homesteaders and smaller mining companies. At night he visits the Deep Caves nightclub and tries to link up with women there, but since he is not particularly good-looking he usually winds up in a back room someplace buying some attention for the night. This means he is only rarely in his room. Since the players are not likely to meet him during the module, stats are not given for his persona. He is not a suspicious sort, so if players set up surveillance on his room to make sure he leaves for a while, he is not likely to notice unless they totally screw up somehow.

Once inside the room the players can search at their leisure. Weider has a briefcase, a couple of suitcases, a portable computer and two data crystals filled with information about the stock market and ores prices—in other words, boring minutia beyond the notice of the players (unless of course they wish to become traders in rare metals). If a player with at least five ranks of Computer Use keeps the computer and data crystals handy, he receives a +2 synergy bonus on any Knowledge check related to the purchase or sale of ores on Io.

In addition to this there is the usual arrangement of furniture—a desk, table, bed and even a video terminal that provides basic computer and vid services (but no means to communicate with any sites on Io other than rooms elsewhere in the hotel). There is also a room safe of the kind normally opened only with a combination set by the owner. The safe is currently locked and requires a Technical (mechanical) check (DC 30) to open. Alternately the players could 'convince' Weider to open the safe, or take the combination out of his mind through telepathy. However, the only items inside are 300 credit chits and a JSR Imports credit card.

If the players look over Weider's briefcase carefully, a Search check (DC 17) locates a hidden panel programmed to open only at the touch of Weider's fingertips. Inside he hides a secret plastic case of Vapour, a mood-altering drug (see sidebar). The players can cut into the case with a knife or other sharp implement if they wish—the case has a Break DC 15, DR 5, and five hit points. If they score more than five hit points they also pierce the plastic tube inside, spilling the contents. Alternately they can bypass the electronic lock with a Technical (electronics) check (DC 26) or by using Weider's actual fingers—one way or another—to open the secret compartment.

Weider is not hooked on Vapour—the drug is not particularly addictive, which is why it is uncommon and unpopular with

pushers—and keeps it handy for use only for entertainment. Because it is hallucinogenic, he only uses it when alone, or on the rare occasions he brings a woman back to his room. Sometimes he and the lucky woman in question both partake. Although this is all very interesting, however, it is of little real value—the Vapour subject is more of a red herring than anything else. Still, a player might take the drug for himself or use it to blackmail Weider for some reason—or he might use it to show Mindy he is a partying kind of guy.

If the players continue to search Weider's room they can locate several items of interest on successive Search checks:

**Search check (DC 18):** Under the bed, near the wall where cleaning equipment would have a tough time reaching, the players discover a black stain. A Medical check (DC 12) positively identifies this substance as blood—actually Carlton Fisk's blood, but getting a definite ID can be tough. Neither the players nor Alison have any samples of Fisk's DNA. The only way to get that would be for Alison to communicate with Theresa Cross through secure channels, and that means a trip to the naval base. Alison will not even attempt such a call from the Comm Centre or the *Liberty's Fortune* because she has been warned by Theresa to avoid taking this risk.

**Search check (DC 20):** Underneath the table in the corner, along one edge, the players discover a series of numbers written in the faux wood surface in ordinary ink. The numbers are '102,' corresponding to the Comm Centre booth where Fisk hid the evidence he collected from the engine wreck. Of course, the players will not know this when they discover the number and the Comm Centre does not post visible numbers on their booths. The players also do not even know that these digits were written by Fisk and cannot prove it by any known means, as there are no fingerprints in the area—and even if there were, there is no way to compare them to Fisk's prints.

**Search check (DC 32):** In the back left corner of the closet, under a strip of carpet, the players discover an electronic key. It is a common sort of key that could go to any number of things but does not seem to have any use anywhere in the room. It definitely does not fit the safe on the closet shelf. In fact, this key will be useful later if the players do happen to find the box of evidence Fisk left hidden in the Comm Centre. Note: The DC for this Search check is reduced by 10 if the players know they are looking for a key—they can get this information by either talking to Sheldon Pierce or locating the box itself.

The players can continue searching the room, but there is nothing else to find. If they have been careful about leaving no trace of their presence, Weider will have no reason to suspect anyone was there and the players get away

## Malcolm McKearns

5<sup>th</sup> Level Human Officer

**Hit Points:** 18

**Initiative:** +3 (+3 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 14 (+4 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +6 melee or +8 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Branch Specialisation (Army), Rallying Call

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 14

**Skills:** Bluff +4, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +10, Pilot +14, Sense Motive +4, Technical (mechanical) +8

**Feats:** Skill Focus (Pilot), Spacecraft Proficiency, Veteran Spacehand

**Equipment:** Toolkit, spare tools for Frigga VTOL, pressure suit, PPG Model 10

Malcolm reached the rank of Captain in the GROPOS before mustering out three years ago, remaining on Io with his friend and fellow officer Simon Quarrie. Both began their new careers with a single modified Frigga, a decommissioned model gathering sulphur dust in the 'boneyard' near one of the GROPOS training slopes near the base of Mount Jove. Since Malcolm is a gregarious sort with many friends in the military—and promised plenty of discounts to visiting friends and family of the military stationed at the base—he was able to get all the help he needed to get his new business off the ground. Later he added a second Frigga, first as a spare and second as a backup when things got busy, which they do several times a year. He loves his job and particularly enjoys hitting up tourists for higher tips and bonuses, especially those that involve exciting dives into swerving canyons or trips into the mouths of wide, dark caverns. He is constantly looking for new and better ways to speed up and enhance his outmoded Friggas, too, and boasts that he can fly that ship better than anybody else on Io.

without incident. However, if they did anything permanent or noticeable—moving things around, breaking into the briefcase and so forth—Weider will report the break-in after quietly discarding his illicit drugs. Only if the players actually *took* the drugs will he keep his mouth shut. The players could even leave a note to this effect: 'We know what you've been doing. If you tell anyone, we'll hand over the evidence to the authorities.' Either way, he will be cowed.



## Encounter Four: The Tour

Malcolm McKearns is a shaggy Scotsman who runs the Io Guided Tours operation along with his three employees: Simon Quarrie, Kal Lo and Vivian Chen. Both Malcolm and Simon were assigned to the same GROPOS unit in EarthForce and survived the war without injury on Io Colony (the Minbari virtually ignored Io in the final push to Earth in the last days of the invasion). Kal and Vivian are a brother and sister team of pilots from Vietnam who emigrated to Io five years ago to escape persecution in their homeland, answering McKearns' ad for qualified pilots. All four are eminently familiar with the converted Frigga-class VTOLs used for low-level tours of Io's surface, cliffs, canyons, volcanoes and mines. Working as a team, they do excellent business despite the fact that they have customers only two or three days a week. They spend the rest of the time taking care of their precious Friggas, the 'Eyes of Io,' *Green Eye* and *Blue Eye*. If something goes wrong, they have enough buddies in the naval base to get them the supplies they need to make repairs.

If the players try to get down to business right away, asking whether or not anyone took Carlton Fisk on a tour within the past month or so, nobody remembers him. Malcolm says he does not keep track of who takes his tours, save of course for the past week or so in case of any insurance claims. He instead reiterates the prices for tours of Io's surface and extensive lava-strewn canyons. If the players succeed in a contested Sense Motive against Malcolm's Bluff check, they will be able to tell he is concealing something, but will not be able to get any more out of him. Pressing the issue, he suggests again—a bit more strongly—that they agree to take a tour.

Should the players get the hint, he sets up a tour within a couple of hours. If they do not figure it out, Malcolm follows them out of the tour office and tries one more time, getting a little bit more direct about it: 'I might not be able t'remember somethin' now, laddie, but the light of big Jove shinin' down on me as I fly across the sulphur seas always sparks me memory, if ye know what I mean.'

When the players return for the tour, Malcolm takes them up alone. At first the tour progresses as normal, the VTOL craft flitting over a variety of snaking rivers of lava or yellow-speckled cliff walls. Then he brings the ship up higher above the surface and speeds along a more direct course. He tells the players he does not know or care who they are, but he will show them what Fisk was looking at if they fork over a 'tip' of 500 credits. This can be reduced by 25 credits for every point by which the group's spokesman beats an opposed Diplomacy check, to a minimum of 250 credits. A

female human character earns a circumstance bonus equal to her Charisma bonus for purposes of this check.

If the players pony up the dough, Malcolm cruises over to the first bit of wreckage, a clump of mangled metal partially covered by a recent lava flow. He explains that the debris was still in the open when Fisk was here, and he investigated the pile of junk himself with an EVA (extra-vehicular activity). Malcolm agrees to allow the players to do the same for an additional 'tip' equal to the first—but a contested Sense Motive/Bluff check reveals he is hiding something. When pressed he admits that after Carlton examined this wreckage, he was disappointed and wanted to move on.

If the players do make an EVA there are two suits available. They can explore the wreckage for up to an hour and can easily break off pieces to bring back—pieces that can later be checked to see if they were once part of EarthForce One. A Search check (DC 21) discovers a twisted black container of some kind amidst the engine, but when examined closely this turns out to be an ordinary electronics junction box that proves nothing. This piece of wreckage is a dead end.

After this, Malcolm informs the players that Fisk then moved to study another, larger piece of wreckage. Since by this point the players will be disappointed, he will take them to that site without any additional charges or complaints. However, when he gets there, all he locates is a sinkhole-like depression in the midst of a deep crevasse. He swears the engine block was here when he brought Fisk. This time he offers to allow an EVA without any fees. If the players do so, a Knowledge (military) or Technical (engineering) check (DC 15) during the EVA allows them to recognise that some sort of explosives were at work and a large object of some kind has fallen through into an open space below. However, constant earthquakes have caved in much of the surface, so that trying to get inside without appropriate digging equipment would be foolhardy.

If the players ask McKearns for help excavating the site, he refuses to help. He is a tour guide, not a miner. Besides which, mining and prospecting on Io is carefully controlled by the government and the Belt Alliance. Purchasing such rights costs tens of thousands of credits. In fact, says McKearns, just bringing the players here could be construed as a violation of his charter. If asked, he tells the players he told the same thing to Fisk and sent the man away. After that he never saw Fisk again, although he did hear that the man was later arrested and exiled from Io. McKearns does not know why, but suspects it might have had something to do with his 'unhealthy' interest in the wreckage.

If the players do manage to acquire a piece of debris during this particular encounter they can analyse it using equipment

on the *Liberty's Fortune*. However, the best the computers there can do is identify the sample as coming from an Earth Alliance ship. If the players find the electronic junction box, three hours of analysis and study—plus a Technical (any) check (DC 15)—determines that this is, or rather was, a particularly high-quality piece of equipment not normally found on typical ships. This is enough to suggest that the wreckage did in fact come from EarthForce One, but does not prove anything more than that.

If the players need to, they can return to the first piece of junk as often as they wish. McKearns will be happy to ferry investigators there many times, especially considering how much money he will be making. However, he will not go near the second site after the first attempt. He thinks it is too dangerous, as the whole area is obviously unstable. Besides, since somebody obviously tried to blow up the wreckage, it is painfully obvious that trying to locate it can be hazardous to one's health. If pressed, Malcolm suggests that the players try to talk to someone who knows more about mining. Maybe they will be willing to undertake an excavation operation, but he certainly is not.

## Encounter Five: The Nightclub

Another course the players may take is to ask around for information about Carlton Fisk. For example, they might visit some of the shops and show pictures of him, asking if anyone remembers seeing Fisk around the base. In this case a Gather Information check (DC 10) easily locates several individuals who remember the man asking around about wreckage on Io's surface. This same check reveals that Fisk was told by some to go to Io Guided Tours, and by others to speak to Michael Seagate in the Deep Caves nightclub. Seagate, it is said, knows something about everything on Io.

Alternately the players may simply proceed to the club without checking around for information about Fisk. Within the Deep Caves asking questions in any sort of detail gets you directed to Seagate automatically, especially if the players are obviously travellers or include aliens in their midst. Seagate is always looking for new people to talk to.

*Taking the lift down to the lowest levels of Mount Jove, you emerge into a corridor lined with pipes and tubes, like those you might see in a dank basement. This hardly looks like the place you would find a nightclub! Yet to the left you definitely hear distant music. Following the sounds, you come to a set of wide bay doors lit with glowing neon. The name, shining in a green glow, is the Deep Caves.*

*Entering, you find yourself in a different world. You can easily forget you are in the bowels of a mountain, surrounded by flashing lights and thumping music. The place is not*

### Michael Seagate

**7<sup>th</sup> Level Human Diplomat**

**Hit Points:** 13

**Initiative:** +0 (+0 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 12 (+2 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +2 melee or +3 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Contact x4, Improved Diplomacy, Government Resources

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +7

**Abilities:** Str 8, Dex 10, Con 9, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 16

**Skills:** Bluff +14, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +13, Knowledge (alien life) +14, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (local) +14, Knowledge (military) +14, Knowledge (star systems) +14, Sense Motive +13, Speak Language (Centauri, Drazi, French, Minbari, Narn, Russian, Spanish), Spot +5

**Feats:** Charming, Low-G Tolerance, Resist Scan, Skill Focus (Diplomacy)

**Equipment:** Perfectly tailored suit

With the barest hint of a French accent betraying his country of origin, Michael Seagate is a witty, pleasant, charismatic personality indeed. He is the manager of the Deep Caves nightclub and can usually be found in his office or wandering around the place talking with old friends and introducing himself to new ones. He particularly enjoys just sitting around talking to visitors, soaking up stories and details like a sponge, dropping names with abandon and telling tales of past experiences with abandon. The only thing he will not discuss is why someone like him is stuck in a place like Io—anyone who asks gets a friendly, casual brush-off.

Because he almost never forgets anything, Seagate is quite well respected around the base, but there are also those who keep a close eye on his actions. Clark's two agents, for example. Seagate naturally knows he is being watched and takes care to guard what he says. He knows there is something in the wreckage of EarthForce One that someone does not want people to know about, but he is not willing to risk his own life to find out what it is. What happened to Fisk is proof enough of that.

*particularly crowded at this time of day, but there are a few groups here and there, as well as a few dancers making use of the raised stage along the right-hand wall. An open bar occupies the centre of the floor and a few waiters and waitresses meander about serving the two dozen or so customers. As you stand there looking around, a snappily dressed host notices your group and comes over, smiling.*



*'Welcome to the Deep Caves,' he says amiably. 'My name is Mark. Can I show you to a seat?'*

Whether the players ask to see Seagate or not, the host directs them to an oval-shaped booth and takes their drink orders, also showing a menu consisting mostly of appetizers and light meals. If the players drop Seagate's name, Mark heads off to find him. A few minutes later Michael Seagate arrives, smiling and introducing himself with zest, almost as though the players are well-known celebrities. He does not know them at all, of course—this is just Seagate's way of getting people to feel comfortable in his presence.

Seagate is more than happy to sit down in the booth with the players and swap stories. He is particularly fond of the time Rebo and Zooty gave a show in the Deep Caves, which were so packed with fans it was almost impossible to move around. Also, whenever a ship gets held up at the Io jump gate for some reason or other, the crews usually find their way to the Caves while waiting for repairs or clearance to continue. Seagate claims to have met ambassadors from any number of races, including Ambassador Mollari before he was assigned to his current post on Babylon 5. He has also met a number of prominent military figures while they awaited transfer to new assignments, among them Jeffrey Sinclair.

Seagate trades such tales for anecdotes about some of the players' adventures on Babylon 5 and beyond. If the players are forthcoming about their escapades, Seagate is very friendly and offers up all sorts of tips about things to see and do on Io. If they withhold information, he eventually excuses himself and departs. After all, swapping stories is a two-way street.

Should the players ask about Carlton Fisk or the wreckage of EarthForce One, Seagate shakes his head and mutters, 'One should not discuss such things in public, *n'est-ce pas?*' If the players continue to pressure him for information, he does not answer but instead invites one of them to a private poker game at 10 pm (2200 hours) that night. 'Perhaps there we can exchange more information, my friend,' he says before departing. Seagate invites only one player—the one doing the most talking, most likely. He will try to ask a human player over an alien, although this is not an absolute requirement. If the player he invites professes not to know poker, he will agree to accept any other volunteer instead.

That evening, when the group returns, Seagate personally meets them at the door and ushers the requested player into one of the back rooms. The rest of the group is not allowed in but is instead asked to kindly wait outside, where they will be served a free round of drinks and appetizers on the house. Meanwhile read the following to the player with the invitation:

*Michael Seagate is all smiles as he leads you into the back of the Deep Caves. You pass along the right-hand side of a smoky room half-filled with eager men staring up at a nearly nude, wildly gyrating woman on a head-high stage. At another door he leads you into a cramped little room dominated by a small round metal table. Three other men dressed in business suits are waiting there, ready to play cards. Along one side of the table you see a set of magnetic chips and an automatic card-dealing machine. Seagate motions for you to sit down before taking the seat at the dealer's position. 'I've taken the liberty of applying the 500 credits buy-in to your hotel bill,' he says with a wink. Note: If the players are staying on the Liberty's Fortune instead of a hotel, the bill will instead be applied to their docking fees. 'Now please, let's play. The rules are tournament style—winner take all.'*

As might be expected, the primary skill for a game of poker is Bluff. Sleight of Hand is used only if the player wishes to cheat during the game, which is not recommended—Seagate will point out several cameras intended to ensure honesty in the room. Over the course of the game the three other players (introduced as Paul Severin, Ivan Chotsky and Reese Wittenberg) will gradually be beaten by either the player or Seagate—allow the player to roll a few Bluff checks and be steadily victorious over the other contestants. This is not fudging—Seagate has arranged for these men to be here and deliberately lose the game so that he and the player can talk privately.

If desired, the Games Master could run the poker game using actual cards. Let the other (non-involved) players take care of Severin's, Chotsky's and Wittenberg's hands. The Games Master can play whatever game of poker he is most familiar with, such as Five-Card Draw or Texas Hold-'Em. In each case, whenever the time comes for a final bet, allow the main player to roll a Bluff check against the defenders' straight-up die rolls. If the player's Bluff check is higher than another player's unmodified die roll (other than Seagate), that player must fold. Otherwise the pot goes to whoever has the best hand. This represents a significant advantage for the primary player, but again, this is by design. Should the player lose regardless of this benefit, Seagate suggests he 'buy-in' again and continue playing. None of the other three 'shills' are afforded this option and excuse themselves as soon as their chips are lost.

Finally Seagate and the invited player are the only ones left in the room. 'At last!' Michael says. 'Sorry for the deception, my friend, but you can never be too sure about anyone in this place. Let us continue the game and we can speak freely. This room's auditory monitoring equipment is, sadly, broken at the moment. What a shame!'

While they talk Seagate continues to deal and go through the motions of playing poker. However, he suggests that the player keep his head down and his back towards the door.

That way the cameras will not be able to get a good look at his mouth, so anyone who is observing will not be able to read his lips. Meanwhile Seagate does the same thing, lowering his head and pretending to study his cards every time he talks about Carlton Fisk. Here are the answers he will give to some of the questions the player might ask:

**‘Did you speak to Fisk?’** ‘Yes, much as we’re speaking now. He wanted to know about the efforts made to collect the wreckage of EarthForce One. I told him there were several pieces still on Io, and that Malcolm McKearns of Io Guided Tours could show him some of the sites from the air.’

**‘What happened to Fisk?’** ‘I only know what’s rumoured—he went out to try and look at some of the wreckage, but was later arrested. I’m not sure if he found anything.’

**‘Do you know where he was staying?’** ‘Yes, he was in room 701 of the Mount Olympus Tower. I remember that specifically because, like you, I arranged the use of his hotel bill to finance our poker game. He lost, regrettably, but then, he wasn’t as skilled with the game as you are.’

**‘Do you know where he went while on Io?’** ‘Yes, he took one of the Io Guided Tours and later returned for a private tour. He also visited the Pierce homestead, presumably because it was closest to one of the larger chunks of EarthForce One wreckage. I don’t know how he convinced the Pierces to let him on their property, however—they’re one of the more private families, even more so now that their son is dead.’

**‘Their son?’** ‘Yes, Marshall Pierce. He was taken into custody shortly after Fisk was, but was then released. Sadly,

## George Dessenz

7<sup>th</sup> Level Human Agent

**Hit Points:** 20

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 17 (+7 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +6 melee or +8 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Security Systems, Sneak Attack +1d6, Skill Mastery (Sense Motive, Move Silently)

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +5

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 12

**Skills:** Balance +12, Computer Use +11, Gather Information +11, Listen +13, Move Silently +11, Sense Motive +13, Spot +13, Technical (electronics) +11

**Feats:** Low-G Tolerance, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (PPG)

**Equipment:** PPG

Dessenz is 52 years old and is nearing the end of his career. He is in charge of Io Security, having been placed here by Clark’s regime to oversee the recovery of EarthForce One wreckage. After the operation concluded, he was left behind to ensure nobody else started snooping around. Fortunately getting around on Io is not easy and the skies above the moon are off limits to unlicensed civilian craft. Thus he is convinced that no one is ever going to be able to get to the wreckage. Even so, after intercepting Carlton Fisk he set explosives to bury the larger piece of engine debris and is now content to keep order on Io.

## Corona Huygens

7<sup>th</sup> Level Human Telepath (P11)

**Hit Points:** 12

**Initiative:** +0 (+0 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 12 (+2 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +3 melee or +5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Maintain Concentration

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 6, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 17

**Skills:** Concentration +15, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (telepathy) +13, Spot +12, Telepathy +13

**Feats:** Combat Telepath, Defensive Block, Far Telepathy, Iron Will, Mindshredder, Nerves of Steel

**Telepathic Abilities:** Accidental Scan, Daze, Deep Scan, Mind Shield, Reality Fabrication, Sense Telepathy, Surface Scan, Warning

**Equipment:** Gloves

Corona is a white-haired 50-year-old woman who serves two masters—Psi Corps and President Clark. Clark, she believes, represents the inevitable future of humanity and although the rest of the Corps does not necessarily agree, they did not object to her assignment to Io. Her main purpose here is to keep an eye out for saboteurs and terrorists who might attempt to disrupt the operation of the jump point at Io. She has offices on the orbital base and on the surface, spending about equal time in both places.

Under normal circumstances Corona will not use her abilities on an unwilling subject unless they have been caught while actively investigating the wreckage of EarthForce One. In this case she uses her Deep Scan and Reality Fabrication abilities to wrest the players’ true mission out of their minds. If she succeeds she gets the name she wants—Theresa Cross—and after some more digging discovers there is nothing else of use. Of course, if any of the players are telepaths they can attempt to resist and if they are also with Psi Corps, Corona will avoid making a scan in that individual’s presence.



a violent earthquake sundered the transit tube back to his homestead and he died of asphyxiation before rescue teams could arrive. The Pierces won't speak to anyone now and keep themselves secluded on their homestead. You do know the law, correct? You cannot enter a homesteader's lands without their explicit permission, except in an emergency. Just a friendly word of advice.'

**'Is it possible the accident wasn't an accident?'** 'Oh, yes, it's possible, but no one found any evidence of any such thing.'

**'Do you know who took Fisk into custody?'** 'It was Io Security, but that's all I know. Some of them were stationed here only recently, and Carlton especially was concerned about the timing. He tried to convince me they were dangerous, although I haven't seen any evidence of that myself.'

Seagate can describe Fisk in great detail, just in case the player wants to confirm that they are both talking about the same person. He may also offer that Fisk was an inquisitive, suspicious sort who was constantly looking over his shoulder. However, Fisk never once mentioned why he was looking for pieces of EarthForce One. There was no hint of his being involved in any sort of investigation and in fact it was painfully obvious that Fisk wanted his actions to be kept secret.

After the player is through picking Seagate's brain, the card game comes to an end. To finish, allow the player to make a contested Bluff check against Seagate on the final hand, winner take all. If the player wins (unlikely considering Seagate's immense Bluff skill) he walks off with 2,500 credits. If he loses he finds a bill for 500 credits on the hotel or docking tab at check-out time.

## Encounter Six: In Jail

There are several ways a player might wind up in the Mount Jove Jail over the course of this module. Some possibilities include:

- ⑤ Getting caught breaking into Fisk's original room (#701) in the Tower
- ⑤ Trying Weider's supply of Vapour or being caught with it in his possession
- ⑤ Weider reporting a break-in and an investigation tracking it by DNA samples left at the scene
- ⑤ Rejecting Mindy severely enough that she becomes angry and reports the player for an imagined crime
- ⑤ Cheating, stealing or any of a number of other petty crimes
- ⑤ Being recognised as someone with a known criminal record

If the group is careful there is no reason they ever have to wind up in a prison cell. This section is included only if they do make a mistake. However, as long as they do not commit murder, the very worst they can expect to have done to them is a stiff fine and eviction from the base.

If the players are arrested for something simple and they do not already have a record, their penalty will usually be a fine and maybe a day or two in jail. In cases where their actions cause damage, they will be ordered to pay for any such damages in addition to serving time and paying any other fees. For particularly heinous crimes, they will be ejected from the station or sent to a more permanent penal facility. Of course, dealing with such a severe occurrence is beyond the scope of this module.

If the players are indeed incarcerated for some infraction or other, getting out is a simple matter of waiting for the sentence to conclude or paying the required fine. Any player not locked up can arrange for bail or other payment. Attempted bribery is not really an option, although a player can try a Diplomacy check (DC 28) to convince the ombuds to go easy on the offenders.

The main risk for the players in prison is that they will become the subject of interest from Clark's two agents, George Dessenz and Corona Huygens (see sidebar). Unless the players do something really obvious, such as putting the true reason they are on Io into their police report, this is not likely to happen. Only if they foolishly made a ruckus or spread Carlton Fisk's name around too loosely will the agents start watching. After that the group will find their movements constantly under observation and if they do anything particularly egregious Dessenz will have them arrested on some trumped-up charge. If they do not give a good story (use contested Bluff or Diplomacy checks), Dessenz calls Huygens in to probe their minds for information. As soon as it is proven that the players are here looking into the EarthForce One accident, Clark's agents will kick them off the moon and that will be the end of this module.

Of course, as soon as the players visit the Pierce homestead this will set off alarms in Dessenz's office. He immediately begins investigating the players, learning where they came from and finally setting up the final encounter.

## Encounter Seven: The Pierce Homestead

Eventually, from one source or another, the players either discover or discern the need to visit the Pierces. They can get the name from Michael Seagate or figure it out after a trip on Io Guided Tours. Any map of the Io Colony will show the distant Pierce homestead is the closest one to the buried chunk of EarthForce One's engines.

The problem is one cannot simply hop on board a transport pod and zip out to the Pierces' small dome. They can attempt to place a call at the Comm Centre, but when Sheldon Pierce answers he immediately denies permission to anyone asking to pay him a visit. The only way the players can possibly convince him to let them come is with a colossal bluff of some sort, at a -10 penalty since Sheldon has already been forewarned. If the players try and fail twice, repeated attempts will get them reported to Io Security—and Sheldon Pierce does not hesitate to warn them about this on the second try.

After that the only way they can get to the Pierces' place is through physical means—hot-wiring a transport tube with a Technical (mechanical) check (DC 20), or hiring Malcolm McKearns to fly them out there in one of his converted Friggas. McKearns will want 500 credits for this and he will not hang around afterwards either.

The Pierce home is a small double-walled dome covering a reinforced house with an earthquake-resistant foundation. The building has six bedrooms, a single bath, a kitchen and a spacious living room. Naturally there are few decorations or furnishings and those that do exist are well secured against quakes. There is a seldom-used docking port at the end of a transport tube and a huge garage filled with mining tools, repair equipment and the like. There is also a two-man crawler and a core mining machine—a vehicle rather like a large drill on treads with a collection basket in the back. Entry to the garage is made through a huge airlock and there is also a man-sized emergency airlock on the outside of the dome. Players can force their way into the dome through the outside entrances with a Technical (mechanical) check (DC 20), but unless they manage to hide their efforts, both the Pierces and Io Security will be notified of the attempt.

If the players do approach from outside they can attempt to cut the power to the Pierce homestead's security alarms. Doing so requires a Search check (DC 18) to locate the proper cables and a Technical (electronics) check (DC 21) to do the deed. If they accomplish this they can break into the house without fear of Io Security getting a frantic call from the Pierces. However, Clark's agents will still find out—they are automatically warned whenever anything happens at the homestead.

Regardless of the means the players use to enter the home, Sheldon Pierce orders his family to lock themselves in their rooms while he defends the house using his PPG rifle. He will not immediately open fire but instead demands the invaders leave at once. He tells them he has already called for Security. If the group attacks they can easily subdue or kill Pierce if they wish, although he resists to the bitter end, believing he is defending his family even unto death.

More than likely the players will attempt to parley with Pierce. They could go about this several ways, but the best

## Sheldon Pierce

**10<sup>th</sup> Level Human Worker**

**Hit Points:** 28

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 17 (+7 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +8 melee or +7 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Blue Collar

**Saves:** Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10

**Skills:** Appraise +13, Drive +15, Knowledge (geology) +13, Profession (miner) +17, Spot +13, Technical (mechanical) +13

**Feats:** Endurance, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Low-G Tolerance, Toughness

**Equipment:** Mining equipment and tools, pickaxe, PPG rifle

Sheldon Pierce is 39 years old. As owner and operator of the Pierce homestead he is effectively lord and ruler of his little chunk of the universe. The mining dome houses himself, his wife Betty, his daughters Emily and Rebecca and his two young sons Luke and Mark. By day Sheldon operates mining equipment in the caves beneath his dome, scraping up all manner of ores into a collection tank that sorts them for later sale. Every now and then he comes across a few diamonds or emeralds, earning him enough money to buy his family a nice meal instead of the usual soup and gruel. He dreams of the big score—a vein of Quantum-40 that would let him pay off the homestead at last and purchase an education for his children.

To Sheldon, his family is everything. The loss of Marshall was a crippling blow that even today threatens to tear his family apart and he cannot—will not—allow that. He is certain that Marshall's involvement with Carlton Fisk is what led to his death. Any attempt by the players to bring up the subject of Fisk makes him angry and upset. The only way the players can convince him to help them is with force, or to prove that President Santiago was assassinated. If they do this they can say Marshall's death was for a reason, and that, at least, will bring Sheldon some peace.

possibility is the truth. Only if they explain why they are here and why Marshall died will Sheldon be moved. Otherwise the players must intimidate or bluff him into submission or use telepathy to subdue him. The best means of intimidation is to threaten his family, although a promise to destroy his home or something similar will also work. However, in any of these cases he will do nothing to help them unless they literally force him to do so at gunpoint.



## Pierce Homestead



Should the players explain their situation and what they are looking for, Sheldon gives in and admits that Carlton Fisk did indeed come to the homestead a month ago. Fisk promised Marshall that he would take him off of Io and set him up with a new life on Earth and it wound up getting him killed. What promises can the players make to ensure the same thing does not happen to Sheldon or the rest of his family? The players will need to come up with a good answer to that question to elicit any further aid from Sheldon. The best answer is that they will set things up so it looks like the Pierces cooperated only at gunpoint, but the players can also promise to spirit the Pierces away from Io—Alison Fernandez will be able to back up that claim with assurances that Theresa Cross has set up new identities for people on many similar occasions. Other solutions might also present themselves, depending on the players' ingenuity.

In any event, once Sheldon has been mollified he will finally answer some questions. The players can also get these answers more forcefully or through telepathy, but of course the truth is preferable.

**‘What did Fisk do while he was here?’** ‘He gave us 200 credits as fair value for rental of my core miner and Marshall took him out to look over the wreck. While he was there, Fisk got out of the vehicle in a pressure suit and wandered around for a while. When he came back, he was really excited.’

**‘What did Fisk find in the wreckage?’** ‘He didn’t show me. He said it was for my protection not to say. It was in some kind of sealed case and locked it up tight.’

**‘So you have no idea what it was?’** ‘No, but it seemed damned important. I don’t think he showed Marshall either, but I guess we’ll never know.’

**‘Can you take us to the wreckage now?’** ‘Yes, but it’ll take a couple of hours to get there in the core miner. I’d take the crawler but there was a collapse in the tunnels after Security visited the place a few weeks ago. The only way you can get to it now is in the miner.’

**‘Security visited the wreck?’** ‘Yes, but they didn’t tell us why. I only know about it because I saw a couple of VTOLs fly over. I went out in the crawler to see, but they didn’t stay long. A couple of days later I went out there again and the whole cavern had collapsed in on itself. Probably after one of the big quakes.’

**‘Did Fisk tell you anything else before he left?’** ‘When we got back here, he was thanking me and telling Marshall he’d start working on his reward and that’s when I got a docking ping on the transport tube. Another pod was coming in, this time with Security guards. Fisk got really agitated and jumped into the pod that brought him here, speeding off in a

## Core Miner

This vehicle, about the size of a large ground car, is shaped like a cylinder with a huge drill on the front end and tracks on all four sides along the body. The rear possesses a containment section designed to open up and capture ores scraped off the sides of a tunnel. Think about Jules Verne’s *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, only on a somewhat smaller scale and designed to collect rocks rather than just penetrate them. The vehicle is not very fast but does not need speed for its normal duties. The interior is completely enclosed and protected against hostile environments, and can seat four comfortably for journeys of up to six hours.

While burrowing, the core miner can travel only forward or in extremely slow turns. Because the tunnel it digs tends to collapse in behind its body, the core miner cannot go in reverse and must dig a new path out of the area it is presently mining. The drill on the front can only penetrate crumbling or volcanic rock similar to that found on Io, not solid bedrock or formed metal. The vehicle possesses sensors capable of detecting impenetrable rock or open spaces up to 60 feet ahead, so the pilot is almost never in danger of getting trapped underground.

**Statistics:** Gargantuan Surface Vehicle; hp 50; DV 6 (–4 size); DR 10; Speed 5 (burrow 2); Acc 1; Dec 1; Han +0; Sensor +2; Stealth 2, Cargo 2,500 lb. (in rear compartment); 1 driver, 3 passengers.

big hurry. The last thing he asked me was if I had any way to contact someone offworld. I said the only place to do that was at the Comm Centre. I suppose that’s where he went next.’

**‘What did the box look like?’** ‘It was long and flat, about three feet by two feet by maybe six inches. There was some kind of super-advanced lock on it. He warned me that if I tried opening it, the whole thing would blow up in my face. Not that I believed him, of course. He did say he didn’t have the key—if that’s true, he must’ve hidden it someplace before he came here.’

**‘Did the guards come looking for the box?’** ‘Yes, they searched my whole damn homestead for it but it wasn’t here, like I told them. Fisk left with it slung under his arm and that’s the Gospel truth.’

At this point the players can depart, following the lead to check the Comm Centre—especially if they found the numbers in Fisk’s original room, which would then suggest



## Io Security Guards

**1<sup>st</sup> Level Human Soldiers**

**Hit Points:** 9

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 12 (+2 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +2 melee or +4 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Damage Resistance 4

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +2, Will -1

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 10

**Skills:** Balance +4 (cross-class), Climb +5, Jump +5

**Feats:** Electrical Tolerance, Endurance, Low-G Tolerance, Weapon Focus (PPG)

**Equipment (indoors):** PPG Model 10, flak jacket

**Equipment (outdoors):** PPG rifle, flak jacket, pressure suit

These guards work for Io Security, but are also handpicked for their loyalty to George Dessenz and by association President Clark. They will not listen to any explanations about evidence that President Santiago's death was an assassination. Other guards encountered later in the module—such as while trying to get back to the ship—might be swayed by such arguments if the players succeed in a Diplomacy check (DC 19). Otherwise, all Io guards use the same stats shown here.

which kiosk Carlton used to make the call to Theresa Cross. This will put them one step ahead of Io Security.

Alternately they can try to visit the wreck using the core miner. If they do this, however, there are two problems. The first is that the miner only fits four people, forcing at least one party member (in a normal-sized group) to stay behind. The second is that George Dessenz has already dispatched a team of six Security guards to the homestead. These guards arrive about an hour after the players first reach Pierce's home and the building receives a warning alarm five minutes before this happens. This permits the players a chance to get away in the returning transport pod (or other vehicle) if they move quickly. However, anyone in the miner has nowhere to go once this happens. There is not enough fuel to get the mining vehicle anywhere else but back to the homestead. Thus the escaping players will have to arrange a rescue, either with the *Liberty's Fortune* or with one of the 'Eyes of Io' operated by Io Guided Tours.

Should the players undertake a trip on the core miner, use the stats shown on the sidebar for that vehicle. The trip to the engine piece takes an hour and a half and digging to its location takes another twenty minutes. From there the players can exit the miner and explore the shattered wreck,

which looks like a pile of tangled, useless debris. Inside one exposed section, however, it is possible to find the residue of an explosive device. Locating this requires a Search check (DC 26) coupled with a Technical (mechanical), Knowledge (astrophysics) or Knowledge (structural engineering) check (DC 24) to spot the offending item and recognise it as out of place. Players cannot take 20 on the Search check because doing so will take far longer than their air supply will last. Unfortunately, even if they locate and identify the object as an explosive there is no real way to prove it was used to destroy EarthForce One. Still, it is something.

Once the players are finished at the wreckage site, they discover upon returning to the homestead that six guards are waiting for them. Hopefully anyone left behind will be able to warn the others that a fight is inevitable. Those waiting can return to Mount Jove in the other transport pod (where they will have to find a place to hide), try to fight the guards on their own or board the Pierces' crawler to await the players' return. Other less savoury options include using the Pierce family as human shields against the guards or threatening to blow up the homestead if the guards do not retreat. These options could result in escalation and even a military response, although such things are beyond the scope of this book and will very likely result in the players' early deaths.

With the crawler, any players separated from the main group can rendezvous with the returning core miner and then either face the guards or try making it back to the base in the vehicle. If they choose the former option they will have to defeat six men with the stats shown in the sidebar. In the latter case, they travel overland for some time only to meet a second crawler with four soldiers armed with PPG rifles (use the same stats except for the weapons). The players will find their vehicle under fire until they surrender. Should they escape, they can get to the base safely—otherwise they have to either give up or resist upon reaching the base's airlock. In the latter case, any players who might have already returned to the base will be able to be there to help, along with the *Liberty's Fortune* pilot, Caitlin Schulz. Victory here leaves the players with no choice but to rush back to the ship and flee Io at top speed—any attempt to go anywhere else results in another encounter with guards.

Incidentally, if the Games Master enjoys a bit of high drama, the middle of this fight would be the perfect time to toss in one of Io's frequent earthquakes.

## Encounter Eight: Leaving So Soon?

At some point the players will decide it is time to leave. They might feel they have done all they can. Perhaps they have

the explosive residue collected from the engine wreckage, or perhaps they even have the ultimate evidence—the sealed case taken from the Comm Centre.

In general, getting the latter item should require, at a minimum, a complete search of Fisk's old hotel room followed by a trip to the Pierce homestead, where Sheldon Pierce unwittingly provides the vital clue. The correct communications booth, of course, is #102, the same number found scrawled underneath Fisk's desk. The kiosks are not visibly numbered, but a player can find the proper one by simply asking an attendant or by performing a Computer Use check (DC 13) on several booths until he zeroes in on the proper spot. Once there, a Search check (DC 18) locates a long, flat box secreted underneath and behind the communication monitor.

The box itself is locked with a high-tech electronic device that prevents access by anyone without the proper key. Any attempt to open it produces an audible warning that trying to pierce the electronic lock without the key will result in an explosion. The key, of course, is hidden under a strip of carpet in Fisk's former hotel room, but the players will have a tough time finding it if they do not already know of its existence. Breaking the seal without the key requires a Technical (electronics) check (DC 40), and anyone even starting to work on it will immediately know they have a virtually impossible task ahead of them. Should an attempt fail, the box explodes, causing 6d6 damage to everyone within 30 feet and destroying the evidence located within.

Note that if Alison Fernandez is present she will tell the players that they do not necessarily need to open the box—Theresa Cross will probably have the means, so all they really have to do is deliver it to her as is. If, of course, they do not mind taking the risk that the container is empty or does not have the evidence Theresa wants.

In any event, when the players go to depart, it is extremely likely that Clark's agents will be waiting for them in the hangar bay. They can be aware of the players' actions through any of a number of means, including informants reporting their activities at the Deep Caves or hidden alarms located on the Pierce homestead. Thus, the players may well find themselves surprised to find a group of guards waiting, backed up by the white-haired George Dessenz. Be sure to alter the following box text as required to set up the scene, depending on which direction the players took to get here.

*Just ahead you see the hangar bay and the doors to the docking port where the Liberty's Fortune awaits. Everything seems quiet as your group moves along. You are confident that at this point your escape is assured and your mission is over. Then the doors slide open and you come to a halt. Standing there before you are several guards with weapons*

*at the ready. Behind them a uniformed man with white hair waits with a smile. 'Surrender at once,' he orders, 'or we'll open fire!'*

Unless the players have deliberately broken the law, Dessenz and Huygens will be reluctant to use anyone other than loyal guardsmen to make the arrest. This limits the final showdown to six guards, or at most four if the players have already fought and defeated some opposition on their way to the ship. The players may also have Sheldon Pierce with them, hoping to take his family to a better life somewhere else, or Mindy Ryszek if she is involved in a romantic relationship with one of the players. Their only options are to flee immediately, attack or surrender.

**Surrender:** If the players surrender the module is basically over, unless some members of the group are not present and can attempt a rescue. Anyone who was arrested has his property seized and is deported from Io on the next transport back to Babylon 5. If they had any evidence in their possession that points towards Santiago's assassination—such as the box from the Comm Centre—they are killed instead (Alison Fernandez, if present, will warn the players that surrender in this case is tantamount to death).

**Flight:** If the players flee, they do not really have anywhere to hide on the station. Their best bet is to flee onto Io's surface where the *Liberty's Fortune* can pick them up. Getting to the surface can be accomplished either by taking a transport tube back to the Pierce homestead or by getting into one of the Eyes of Io to rendezvous with the ship later on. Other options may also occur to the players. As they flee, a running gun battle will likely result between the players and Dessenz's guards.

**Combat:** The final option, attack, is probably the most likely. George Dessenz begins by parleying, trying to convince the players to give up right then and there. He does not have a weapon out and holds up his hands in a non-threatening, almost inviting manner. 'You have no other choice,' he tells the group. 'You have nowhere to go. Even if you get onto your ship, there's no way the airlocks will open for you now.'

This is actually a significant problem, but there are two ways around it. One is if Mindy has fallen in love with one of the players. If so, she will do anything to help out, including using her powers of sex appeal to convince the officer in charge to let the *Liberty's Fortune* go. The players have to think of this in advance, however. Otherwise the *Fortune's* pilot, Caitlin, will have already made surreptitious 'arrangements' (i.e. computer hacking) to get the doors to open on command. Dessenz is so convinced that the players have nowhere to go that he does not even consider escape as a possibility and if he survives the showdown he will be so stunned to see the



ship escape that he will not be able to summon military help until the players reach the jump gate.

Should the players fight, use the stats for Dessenz and Huygens on p.49 of this book, along with the requisite number of Security guards from Encounter Seven. During the battle Huygens uses her Daze telepathic ability while the others open up with PPGs. Caitlin Schulz will come to the players' aid, opening fire on the enemy's rear with her own weapon, but upon doing so two guards will rush the ship, forcing her to close the hatch once again. If the fight lasts more than ten rounds, 2d6 additional guards will come into the fray, charging from down the docking port's long hallway. A Spot check (DC 10) or Listen check (DC 10) notices them, but anyone still in combat or inside the docking bay suffers a -5 penalty on these rolls. Basically, the extra guards prevent the players from wasting too much time looting the bodies of anyone they dispatch.

After the battle ends, the victorious players can board *Liberty's Fortune*, at which point Caitlin activates the hangar doors and the pinnacle makes its escape. She orders everyone into crash couches to prepare for combat, but to everyone's amazement the ship reaches the jump gate without any further incident or challenges.

## Aftermath

After this escape, the players reach Babylon 5 a few days later. If they left the base without incident (which is generally likely only if their mission failed) they can land with no trouble. However, if they ran afoul of Clark's agents, the *Liberty's Fortune* is met by a flight of Starfuries immediately upon exiting the jump gate. The ship is escorted back to Babylon 5 where the players are all placed under arrest. The ship is impounded and searched, and any items of evidence the players collected are taken away.

Shortly thereafter, Sheridan and Garibaldi interview the group and ask for an explanation. Talia Winters, surprisingly, is not present. Garibaldi insists that the players respond truthfully so that a telepath's intervention will not be necessary. The two then both listen to the players' tale of what happened on Io and what they found while they were there—if anything. If they discovered any

wreckage or Fisk's box (opened or not), Garibaldi produces these items and asks if these are what the players are referring to. Upon receiving confirmation, he and Sheridan exchange nods.

*After nodding to each other, Captain Sheridan rises from his seat. 'I was afraid of that,' he explains. 'For some time we've heard occasional rumours that Santiago's death might not have been an accident. I'm not sure these items, or your word of honour, proves this is the case, but they're certainly strong evidence in favour of this theory. I have to tell you, the authorities on Io were quite adamant that you be arrested upon returning here, but I don't think any crime has actually been committed. The charges against you were theft [plus possibly murder, flight from justice and so on], but I don't think we're ready to release the full story of your little quest to the public just now. Therefore, Mr. Garibaldi and I are going to arrange a 'trial'—he says the word with his fingers making little quotation marks in the air—'and pronounce you guilty, but the sentence will be suspended pending further investigation. Further investigation, I might add, that will never take place. Is that acceptable?'*

[After the players agree:] *At that, he nods and pushes your belongings across the table. 'All of this happens under one condition, of course. You must keep quiet about what you know for now, since we don't know if it's true. If it is, the only reason this Theresa Cross person would've wanted this evidence is if she's on the right side, so it's all right to give it to her. I do have one recommendation for you, though—don't plan any more trips to Io in the near future!'*



After this, the players are released. They can do what they will with any evidence they have managed to collect. Theresa Cross, it seems, is waiting for them on Babylon 5 and has left messages in the players' quarters asking to meet at once. If the players do go, and hand over whatever evidence they found, she gives them their reward and thanks them profusely for their help. She looks simultaneously relieved to know the truth and upset at the confirmation she received.

**Note:** In the event the players only hand over Fisk's unopened box, Theresa takes it and departs, promising to transfer the reward money should the contents prove worthy. This she does three days later, along with a private message to each participant that what they found did indeed prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that President Santiago was assassinated.

Additionally, Theresa lives up to her promise to Alison Fernandez, taking her aside privately and revealing the long-awaited truth: IPX agents arranged for her dismissal from the Diplomatic Corps. They did this because Ambassador Sullivan specifically asked them to do so—Theresa does not know why, but assumes he just did not like her for some reason and wanted her removed. IPX agreed to his terms because they were then able to gain their services for themselves. Thus, in a sense, Alison has been working for the enemy all this time. Theresa then asks Alison to work alongside her in a new task—fighting an underground battle against President Clark and anything his vile hand has touched. This naturally includes IPX—so Alison readily agrees and departs the station with Theresa immediately.

### Other Possible Post-Module Events

**Pierce Haven:** If the players leave Io with Sheldon Pierce and his family, the ex-miners depart the station aboard the *Liberty's Fortune* with Theresa Cross, who promises to take them somewhere else in the Earth Alliance and give them all new identities. Where they wind up is not relevant to the scenario and in fact Theresa will not tell the players unless some pressing need later arises. One way this might happen is if some of Pierce's family remain on Io and require 'additional rescuing'. In this case the location of the Pierces' new home is up to the Games Master.

**A Blushing Bride?** If the players bring Mindy back to the station, what happens is totally up to the player who led her there. Mindy wants an adventurous husband and one of the players will certainly fill that role. Mindy could become a permanent Non-Player Character or even a player's wife if the romance continues. She is not a stay-at-home kind of person, though. If the player leaves her behind during an adventure, she probably will not be waiting for him when he comes back.

**Once and Future Enemies:** If the players fight Clark's agents on Io and leave them alive, Dessenz and Huygens become permanent enemies of the group. Dessenz is forced to retire on Io and Huygens is recalled to Psi Corps where she receives a demotion and reprimand. Both could reappear in the campaign at some future point seeking vengeance. In addition to this, the players also become known to President Clark's other agents, which could have other consequences later on.

### Suggested Experience for This Module

Searching Carlton Fisk's hotel room: 100

Playing poker with Michael Seagate: 100

Using Io Guided Tours to check out the wreckage: 100

Getting onto the Pierce homestead: 100

Convincing Sheldon Pierce to help the players despite what happened to his son: 200

Collecting evidence directly from the engine wreckage: 300

Defeating Dessenz and Huygens in the final battle (as opposed to running or surrendering): 200

Reneging on a promise to help the Pierce family after acquiring their aid: -300

Returning Fisk's evidence to Theresa Cross: 800 (opened or unopened)



# Module Three:

## Requiem for the Dilgar

'You and the rest of your kind take blind confidence in the belief that we are monsters—that you could never do what we did. The key ingredient...cannot be synthesized; it must be taken from living beings. For one to live forever, another one must die. You will fall upon one another like wolves. It will make what we did pale by comparison. The billions who live forever will be a testimony to my work, and the billions who were murdered to buy that immortality will be the continuance of my work. Not like us? You will become us. That is my monument, Commander.'

—WarMaster Jha'Dur to Commander Sinclair, 2258

*This is not a good time. Enemies are far more numerous than allies. I need to make friends in any way I can. I must seek others and I must reach beyond the normal borders. I must, as my associates in the corporations say, 'think outside the box.'*

*Fortunately, just such an opportunity has presented itself...*

## Background

### Module Summary

- 5 A freighter crew drops an amnesiac off on Babylon 5.
- 5 The players have an opportunity to interview and scan this 'John Doe'.
- 5 John Doe walks out of Medlab and disappears, and the players are asked to help find him.
- 5 The players track Doe to Brown Seven and he is identified as a Dilgar named Lac'Zon.
- 5 The players must fight a Drazi hunt team assigned to capture or kill Lac'Zon.
- 5 Lac'Zon is released and the players are asked to observe his movements.
- 5 Theresa Cross arrives and asks Alison Fernandez to try making an alliance with Lac'Zon's people.
- 5 Lac'Zon goes to meet his own people on Mitoc.
- 5 Drazi commandos attack the meeting on the ground.
- 5 A Drazi ship attacks the Dilgar and Earth forces in a three-way space battle.

### Names and Places of Interest

- 5 John Doe: Anonymous name given to the mysterious amnesiac
- 5 *Even Steven*: Belt Alliance ship that disappeared in 2257
- 5 Alvin Seale: Belt Alliance crewman who vanished in 2257 and whose uniform is worn by John Doe
- 5 Comac: Brakiri system where John Doe was recovered floating in space
- 5 Lac'Zon: Dilgar agent sent to Babylon 5 to gather information
- 5 Jamison Phillips: Drug pusher who fights the players in Downbelow
- 5 Elshadaz: Drazi who sees Lac'Zon entering Brown Seven
- 5 Mitoc: Mostly dead planet where Lac'Zon meets up with his recovery team
- 5 Jal'Maris: Dilgar friend of Lac'Zon who arrives to take him home
- 5 *Demeter*: Hyperion that arrives to help the players
- 5 *Feeder of the Flame*: Dilgar Ochlavita Destroyer that arrives to help the Dilgar
- 5 *Tol'kani*: Drazi ship that arrives to destroy the Dilgar

The tale of Jha'Dur's death at the hands of the Vorlons as she departed Babylon 5 spread like wildfire through the League of Non-Aligned Worlds. Within less than a month the story had reached every corner of known space. There were celebrations on the Brakiri, Drazi and other capitals of nations who had lost millions at the hand of this cruel and unscrupulous taskmistress. The day she was at last brought to justice became a holiday for a great many cultures.



They were not the only ones who heard the tale, however. In the midst of a backwater system, within an asteroid field surrounded by a deadly radiation belt, a small Dilgar outpost has survived to the present day. On this station approximately 250 survivors of a now-dead race remain hidden from the rest of the galaxy, fully aware that were they to make an appearance anywhere in the civilized territories they would be captured, questioned and executed in any of a number of terrible ways. For twenty-six-plus years now, they have been content to remain in hiding, scavenging and raiding on occasion to gain enough resources to eke out their sheltered existence. For that time they have believed they are the last of their people in the universe.

Until Jha'Dur, that is. With her return, these survivors have now begun to believe that perhaps more of their kind survived the war. What if a fleet of ships escaped and is now hiding on the rim? What if a distant colony was founded prior to the destruction of Omelos and still remains undiscovered? These lonely Dilgar, marooned on a listening post whose purpose has long since become moot, now have more hope than they have enjoyed in the last two decades.

How can this last bastion of a once-proud race make contact with any other survivors, if they even exist? They cannot simply send out a message, which could be traced. Nor can they visit frontier worlds, because if they are caught and recognised they will not only bring themselves a swift death but could lead others back to the last of their kind in their desolate outpost. No, there must be a central location somewhere—a base where any other Dilgar survivors would be most likely to visit. A gathering place where members of dozens or even hundreds of other races meet regularly, so that another arrival would barely be noticed. A site where a Dilgar in disguise could slip in easily and remain undetected.

Fortunately, as these desperate survivors have just now realised, there is such a base. The very same base where Jha'Dur met her end. The name of the place is Babylon 5.

**Suggested Level for This Module: 4-6 4<sup>th</sup> level characters**

## Between Modules

This module takes place over a period of several weeks on Babylon 5. The only off-station time comes near the end, in the final few encounters. Thus events that are happening 'between' modules can also happen as this one unfolds. Some suggestions are listed here, while the Games Master can also come up with more of his own.

### Tania Lancaster

**5<sup>th</sup> Level Human Diplomat/4<sup>th</sup> Level Reporter**

**Hit Points:** 15

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 12 (+2 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +3 melee or +3 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Contact x3, Journalistic Sense, Sex Appeal

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 11, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 17

**Skills:** Appraise +10, Bluff +15, Computer Use +14, Diplomacy +19, Forgery +10, Gather Information +19, Knowledge (personalities) +14, Intimidate +15, Listen +14, Sense Motive +15, Spot +14

**Feats:** Alertness, Iron Will, Nerves of Steel, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Stubborn

**Equipment:** None

Tania is an up-and-coming reporter looking to make a name for herself by interviewing as many important personalities as she can. She is very aggressive towards this end and has an unfailing sense of who she needs to talk to in order to make an interview happen. She usually seems sweet and genuine at first, but if refused she changes to more desperate tactics and possibly even threats. She is not making a lot of friends, but considers such things unimportant.

### Link to 'The Coming of Shadows'

In this episode the aging Centauri Emperor makes a state visit to Babylon 5. During his visit he collapses and while on his deathbed makes an apology to G'Kar for all the wrongs the Centauri have levelled on his people in the last few decades. Shortly thereafter a Narn base is attacked and wiped out by Ambassador Mollari's secret allies, the Shadows. The Emperor dies whispering a final warning to Mollari. G'Kar goes berserk and tries to kill Mollari but is talked out of it by Captain Sheridan.

During the early stages of this episode a nosy reporter named Tania Lancaster pops up on the station and tries to arrange for an interview with the Centauri Emperor. At first she tries to set up the meeting through Ambassador Mollari before the Emperor even arrives. A Centauri player who is part of the diplomatic staff will have to deal with this pushy, annoying woman who refuses to take no for an answer. She will try anything—bribery, complements, tantrums, whatever it takes to get the player to agree. Should she convince him to set up the interview, Mollari angrily vetoes the idea and



lambasts his unfortunate underling for being so brainless. The Emperor is in no shape to grant interviews to every reporter who comes along!

Should the players not be involved in this initial meeting, Tania still makes the attempt and is soundly rebuffed. She does not give up easily, though. She continues trying to make the arrangements by speaking to other Centauri and eventually the Ambassador complains to Security about her actions. They naturally have her banned from the docking bay and anyplace else that the Emperor is going to be during his visit. However, Tania hears through her own connections that there is a group of troubleshooters on the station who can accomplish damn near anything. She approaches the players as they relax in the Nova Nine and offers them 1,000 credits if they can get her an interview with the Emperor.

At this point what happens is up to the players. They may simply refuse her offer, but of course she will try whatever she needs to if she thinks it will help her get her way. She is definitely not above using sex appeal, either. If she gets nowhere with the group, she picks the most charismatic and attractive male human among them and tries a different tactic. She 'runs into' that person later on, alone, and explains that while she is sorry they could not come to terms, she has other options. Still, she thought he was interesting and wanted to get to know him better. This proceeds to dating and possibly more, only to have her make her pitch again later on at whatever time seems appropriate.

Should all her tactics fail, she does eventually try again and is arrested after she tries to sneak into the Emperor's room in Medlab later on. A player who works in Medlab could be involved in this fracas, too. She shows up with a cameraman and tries to force her way past Dr. Franklin. If the player acts quickly, he can keep the two of them from bothering the dying Emperor.

If she does convince the players to help her (one way or another), Mollari is adamant that the interview not take place. The only way the players have any chance is to try to intercept the Emperor as he moves from one place to another. Centauri Guardsmen will not let any of them pass, however, and attempting to do so provokes a huge firefight. Since the players are not likely to be foolish enough to challenge the elite of the Emperor's personal guards, stats for them have not even been provided here, but suffice it to say they would make short work of any group of medium-level players.

This is actually a very difficult scenario. The players are not likely to succeed in arranging the interview, considering the Emperor's health and Mollari's absolute refusal to permit the meeting. The only way the players can theoretically pull it off is if they have a favour they can call in, or know someone with some significant interest or pull. Even if the players do not succeed, however, they should be rewarded for their efforts as long as they give it the old college try.

Suggested experience for this scenario: 200

### Links to 'GROPOS'

During this episode 25,000 ground-pounders arrive on Babylon 5 and take 'shore leave' on the station. The possible side scenarios this presents are endless. Here are some possibilities:

**The Stereotypical Brawl:** While the players are relaxing in the Nova Nine Pub, a group of unruly soldiers starts a fight. Of course the players are there and have to put a stop to it before their favourite watering hole is damaged beyond recognition.

**Sibling Rivalry:** A sibling of one of the players is among the soldiers, and the reunion is not particularly happy. The player's brother/sister confronts him and is then arrested for disorderly conduct. It is up to the player to bail him out.

**Murderous Intent:** A soldier is accused of murdering a civilian who cheated him during a card game in Downbelow. Security cannot get anyone to talk, so it is up to the players



to figure out what really happened. Did the soldier really do the deed, or was he framed by someone else?

**The Stolen Bikes:** One of the transports reports three Skimir-class recon bikes (see *The Earth Alliance Fact Book*, p.165) missing from its inventory. Meanwhile reports start coming in that motorcycles have been seen racing along the Central Corridor, through the Hydroponics Garden and in other areas of Babylon 5 where wide-open spaces can be found. Security cannot react fast enough to catch the fast-moving bikes, which disappear into lifts after the races and thence vanish into Downbelow.

To solve this latter encounter, a lurker or other player with connections in the underground will need to pass himself off as a skilled race driver. Bookies in Downbelow manage the races, staging runs through the station and broadcasting them using pre-placed cameras. Although the players quickly discover the location of the betting parlour—a back room of the Dark Star, located with a Gather Information check (DC 14)—finding the bikes themselves will be a much greater challenge. An undercover investigator will be carefully checked out before being allowed to try the bikes for himself.

Should the player's cover story check out, he is allowed to participate in the next race. Races are being held on an almost hourly basis and overworked Security forces just do not have the means to stop this otherwise petty crime. The next race is held along a stretch of the Central Corridor and the undercover player learns this with just enough advance time to get the rest of his team into position to interrupt the race. As soon as they do so, however, the other two bikers flee, setting up a running high-speed chase through Babylon 5's curving interior!

If the players recover the bikes, Garibaldi pays them an appropriate reward (if necessary) and the vehicles are returned to the transport. The GROPOS, however, are not very happy with the players, for watching the bike races was a lot of fun. A brawl or two may be the result...if the players do not hide until the soldiers finally ship off.

Suggested experience for this scenario: 150

## Encounter One: The Amnesiac

This is an unusual module in that there is no standard 'briefing' at the beginning. By now the players may have become used to having their patron show up, give them a mission and send them on their way. This time the mission comes later, as a reaction to other events. If this is handled

### John Doe

**Treated as a 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Agent of an Unknown Race**

**Hit Points:** 10

**Initiative:** +1 (+1 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 11 (+1 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +3 melee or +3 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Security Systems, Sneak Attack +1d6

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 13

**Skills:** Bluff +7, Computer Use +6, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +7, Listen +6, Sense Motive +6, Speak Language (Brakiri, Centauri, Dilgar, English, Narn)

**Feats:** Endurance, Iron Will

**Equipment:** None

John Doe appears to be a mostly bald human about 55 or 60 years old but very spry for his age. He has no memory of any of his skills or abilities, such as Computer Use or Escape Artist. Should he need to use them, he does so instinctively, and wonders afterwards just how he was able to accomplish such a feat. The English language is second nature to him and in this persona he does not realise he actually knows any other tongue. However, should he hear anyone speaking any of the other listed languages, he recognises the words and discovers he can converse with that individual like a native.

properly the players may not even be aware that they are involved in a major module until it is halfway over!

As this scenario begins the opening moves of the Narn-Centauri War are in full swing, but that does not mean the war is the only thing happening. Behind the backdrop of a steadily growing conflict, life goes on. Traders continue to ply the space lanes and commerce is still taking place throughout the known galaxy. Except for the occasional fight between Narn and Centauri residents of Babylon 5, life on the station proceeds as it always has.

Unnoticed amidst the daily press of dockside activity, a civilian freighter arrives on its way to deliver Brakiri brandy to Vega. When the ship docks, the captain reveals to Security that they picked up a 'floater' while outbound from Comac (a 'floater' is a lifepod with its occupant in suspended animation). The individual on board was wearing little more than a ragged uniform identifying him as a member of the Belt Alliance, but he has no memory of what happened to him. The freighter crew hands the man over to Garibaldi for processing and he in turn delivers the unfortunate amnesiac to Dr. Franklin for examination.



Since the man cannot recall his own name, Franklin refers to him as 'Mr. Doe.' This refers to a long-standing tradition, leading back to the ancient 20th Century, in which unknown victims of serious injury are named 'John Doe' or 'Jane Doe' until identified. After a series of interviews and examinations, the doctor decides that Mr. Doe could be suffering from amnesia, but he just does not know enough about the man's physiology to be sure. Mr. Doe seems to have genetic markers for a variety of different races in his body, making his actual race indeterminate. Although he generally appears human except for a significant lack of body hair, he has Narn, Abbai, Brakiri, Vree, Markab and human DNA in his system, in addition to several others Dr. Franklin cannot identify (one of them is Dilgar, but this is almost impossible to detect).

### Medical Interaction

It is very unlikely that a player will be involved in the actual arrival of Mr. Doe on Babylon 5. Basically, the crew of the freighter *Raphael's Masterpiece* calls ahead as they are landing to have a medical team standing by for a delivery. A sedated John Doe is then handed over to Security and sent straight to Medlab. Unless the players happens to be on duty in the docking bay at the time, they will not have any reason to be notified of Doe's arrival, which is not very big news—what with the war and all.

Players learn of the amnesiac's presence at this early stage only if they are working in the dock or are in Medlab for some reason when Doe is delivered there. If an injured player is in Medlab recovering from wounds from a previous scenario, this would be a perfect time to begin this module. Also, a player with medical background might be present in Dr. Franklin's office area while Mr. Doe is first examined, or perhaps shortly after he arrives.

Any player in Medlab (for whatever reason) on this first day has a chance to look at any of the numerous scans and tissue tests made on the mysterious new arrival. In the event the player is a doctor and is called upon to identify DNA samples, such an action requires a successful Medical check (DC 20). If this is successful the player recognises that multiple racial DNA samples are present, one of which is clearly human. A further Medical check (DC 25) is required for each of the five other racial types that can be identified (Narn, Abbai, Brakiri, Vree, and Markab). Following this, a successful Medical check (DC 40) can discern Krish, Mitoc, and Dilgar DNA, but this level of success should be beyond the reach of most players.

In addition to the DNA, a player who examines the scans of Mr. Doe's body and succeeds in a Medical check (DC 18) will notice a faint residual radiation signature that cannot be identified. A further Medical check (DC 22) reveals that this radiation is not harmful and seems to be a product of the

natural environment of the man's homeworld. Although the signature produces a faint interference on medical scans, this can easily be corrected. Actually this radiation is a potential clue to the location of the Dilgar outpost, but the players probably will not realise this until much later, if at all. If there is no doctor among the players, Dr. Franklin should mention the presence of the radiation at some point, but keep it low-key, as if it were of little importance.

If any of the players is a doctor or has another professional reason to hang around in Medlab, he will get a chance to talk to John Doe after he awakens. Doe speaks willingly but shakily, as if always constantly struggling to dig deeply into memories he can no longer access. Here are the answers to some common questions the players might think of:

**'Do you remember your name?'** 'No. They've started calling me Mr. Doe, and for now, I'm content to go with that.'

**'What do you remember?'** 'Very little. Sometimes I catch glimpses of men in dark blue uniforms. They were shouting orders. Something very bad was happening. I remember a fire, I think. Bright lights, anyway. Was my ship destroyed? I don't know.'

**'Did you get in the lifepod, or did somebody put you there?'** 'I can't remember. Sometimes I think I remember crawling into something that could've been a capsule, but it's all very hazy.'

**'What would you do now if you were allowed to leave Medlab?'** 'I don't know. I have no memory of what I like or dislike. I suppose first I'd go eat some foods and watch some vids. Maybe then I'd start to remember who I was. Dr. Franklin says I should stay here tonight though, and that's fine with me. If I go out wandering around, I could get lost.'

**Other Questions:** The players can ask any of a number of other questions, such as 'How is it you have Narn DNA?' or 'Where did you learn English?' Doe always responds that he does not know. If the players continue badgering him, Dr. Franklin comes back over and asks them to stop. Then he sedates Doe and tells the players to let the poor man rest.

### Telepath Interaction

Another obvious means of examination is to employ a telepath to scan Mr. Doe. A player telepath will be called upon to do this if available; otherwise Talia Winters or any other commercial telepath can be used for this role. If the players do not have a telepath among them, they will have to specifically request or suggest Talia's presence—she will not bother unless the players insist or recommend she perform a scan.

Mr. Doe will not initially resist any telepathic ability, as long as the offer is made up front with the stated purpose of helping him with his amnesia. A surface scan will reveal that he is telling the truth, as far as he knows it. A deep scan will show nothing but dead areas where information seems to be missing, as though from brain damage. Mr. Doe will last for three rounds of deep scans before falling unconscious from nonlethal damage, but he remains 'out' for only five rounds following the termination of the scan and recovers quickly.

While a player is performing a deep scan, he may attempt to locate the reason for the missing information. If this is done before Mr. Doe falls unconscious, the player may make a single Telepathy check (DC 25). Upon a success he discovers that telepathic alterations have been made in Mr. Doe's mind, although the nature of those modifications is unknown. If anything, the changes resemble those done during a mindwipe or total personality replacement. The obvious conclusion now is that someone did this to Mr. Doe deliberately, but the reason for the changes remains a mystery at this stage.

Should the players fail to succeed in this check, they learn only that something is 'wrong' about Mr. Doe's mind, but the nature of the 'wrongness' cannot be determined. The weakened Mr. Doe refuses further attempts at deep scans because they are causing him great pain and if scans are forced upon him they reveal nothing more.

If Talia (or another commercial telepath) is performing the scan, she will not go so far as to attempt this check unless the players specifically ask her to do so. This is the sort of information the players must acquire on their own initiative—it will not be freely given.

### End of Day One

After the day passes, Dr. Franklin decides that the mysterious amnesiac is no threat and leaves him in a private, unguarded room. Franklin intends to anaesthetise Mr. Doe the next morning and perform an operation to inspect his cerebral cortex for damage. Sometime that night, however, the patient disappears. No one sees him leave. Apparently, he just decides to get up and walk out and nobody notices. Mr. Garibaldi puts out an all-points bulletin on Mr. Doe, but Security forces cannot locate him.

## Encounter Two: Investigations

Depending upon the players' nature, they may or may not actually participate in this encounter. If the players have no connection with Security or Medlab, they might well not even hear about Doe unless they read the *Universe Today* article about him. After reading that particular feature, interested

players might inquire further. This is not required, however. Players do not actually need to participate in Encounter One or Encounter Two in order to continue with the rest of the module, although if possible they should be given every opportunity to get involved.

### Interviewing Security

After Doe disappears, *Universe Today* reporters pick up on the story and publish the article shown in the Appendix, along with a photo of the mysterious man. This is the most likely way the players find out about him. By this point the chance to interview him has been lost, but other sources of information are available. Also, a lurker or other uninvolved player might actually have an encounter with Doe without realising it. See Encounter Four.

In any case, upon learning of Mr. Doe's existence, inquisitive types will likely think of Security as the first place to go start the interview process. This is appropriate for those who frequently look into mysteries or take on detective work, but they need to have good reputations in order to tap this source of data. A Diplomacy check (DC 15 or higher) may be required if the players are not well known or have dubious reputations.

In any event, if the players visit Security they can speak to Zack Allen, who will answer the following questions:

**'Where'd they find this Doe guy?'** 'He was found floating in a life pod by the civilian freighter *Raphael's Masterpiece*. He was in the Comac system at the time.'

**'Where did the freighter dock?'** 'Bay A-16, one of the freighter ports.'

**'Any identifying marks on or in the pod?'** 'The pod and Doe's uniform were Belt Alliance designs, but we don't know what ship.'

**'Isn't it unusual to not know what ship?'** 'Yes, most pods have identifying marks and serial numbers, but this one looked like it got fried by some significant heat. All those things were burned off the outside and the inside just looks like any common escape pod.'

**'Was Doe okay?'** 'He was suffering from amnesia, but otherwise I think he checked out. Ask Dr. Franklin.'

**'Did he talk at all?'** 'Yeah, but he didn't say a lot. Like I said, he had amnesia. Last night he just wandered off and nobody knows where he went.'

**'Did a telepath scan him?'** 'I don't know. Ask in Medlab.'

**'What happened with the DNA check? Did that identify him?'** 'I don't know. You'll have to ask Dr. Franklin.'



**‘What happened to the ship that found him?’** ‘They’re already gone, bound for Vega. Mr. Garibaldi didn’t see any reason to hold them up just because they were kind enough to drop off a drifter.’

**‘Can we see the lifepod?’** The players should make a Diplomacy check (DC 16). If this fails Allen refuses, but on a success he grudgingly agrees. ‘Go ahead if you want. They’ve got it locked away down in Cargo Bay A-16. I’ll call ahead and let ‘em know to let you in.’

**Other Questions:** The players may also think of other queries, but the above represents the sum total of Zack Allen’s knowledge on the subject. Other requests will be directed to Dr. Franklin in Medlab.

### The Lifepod

The pod is stored adjacent to docking port A-16, in a small cargo storage bay. A single roving guard has his eye on the area. Players visiting the hangar without permission to investigate the pod will need to make a Bluff check opposed by the guard’s Sense Motive skill of +6. Success indicates they have managed to convince him that they have the right to look over the pod. Of course, if the players already have permission, the man stands aside without resistance. He does, however, insist on watching their efforts either way, just to make sure they do not take anything or damage the evidence.

The pod is essentially a bullet-shaped cylinder with a rounded tip. The whole thing is scarred, pitted and burned as if it passed through something very hot, possibly an atmosphere. There is no window looking in, although the top can be snapped open easily enough.

Pods of this sort are cold sleep capsules designed to keep someone alive for very long periods. A player who succeeds in a Knowledge (astrophysics) or Technical (space travel) check (DC 18) realises that this pod design is not commonly carried by Belt Alliance vessels, but is sometimes used to transport the victims of injury or disease to a location where they can receive help. If a ship is damaged or destroyed, it is conceivable that a crewman might take to one of these escape capsules to save his own life.

Although Zack Allen said there were no serial numbers visible on the pod, a player who succeeds in a Knowledge (astrophysics) or Technical (space travel) check (DC 21) remembers that Belt Alliance vehicles often inscribe serial numbers within their interior control panels. That or a Search check (DC 23) locates the serial number of this particular pod underneath a metal slat by the sole occupant’s feet.

Although the players will not be able to look the information up immediately, the serial number matches that of a pod

assigned to the Belt Alliance freighter *Even Steven*, reported lost with all hands in 2257. If this information is to be acquired clandestinely, it requires a Computer Use check (DC 22) to track down this obscure detail. If the player has access to Security records on the level, he can take 20 on this check. Alternately the players can simply ask Security to look the information up for them.

In addition to searching the pod, a player may perform a highly detailed scan of the vehicle itself, looking for anomalies. Of course, he will have to bring his own scanning equipment along. This is something that must be done by a player—Security teams will not succeed on their own and have in fact already tried and come up with little useful information. If the scanning player succeeds in a Technical (space travel) check (DC 25), the player will note that the Comac system, where the pod was found, has an ambient cosmic radiation level far in excess of what this pod has actually endured since it presumably was released in 2257. The obvious conclusion is that Mr. Doe has not really been floating in space for two years—more like two weeks. Dr. Franklin can also confirm this later, but only if shown the evidence and asked to perform the appropriate tests.

### Interviews in Medlab

Inquisitive players do not have to stop asking questions at Security—they can also go to Medlab. Of course, a player who already works or regularly visits Medlab on a professional basis will already know much of the information listed hereafter. Upon beginning to ask questions, players are directed to Dr. Franklin, who is more than happy to provide answers.

A thinking player might also wish to investigate the uniform. Dr. Franklin is more than happy to oblige and shows the group to a locker where Doe’s clothing and personal effects are stored. The players discover a torn set of rags that show evidence of fighting, mostly from several PPG burns. If the players perform a detailed examination of the uniform, the blood stains and hair samples they find do not match those of Mr. Doe. This evaluation requires a Medical check (DC 15) and must be performed with the proper medical equipment. Dr. Franklin, incidentally, has not bothered to investigate this possibility because it quite frankly has not occurred to him. Why would a floater be wearing someone else’s clothes?

In any case, here are some of the questions the players might ask of Dr. Franklin. Note that the answers to these questions will be different if the players participated in Encounter One. They may already know the answers, or may have learned something in addition to these tidbits.

**‘Was there anything unusual about Mr. Doe?’** ‘Other than the amnesia? Yes. He looked human, but he had genetic markers for the Narn, Abbai, Brakiri, Vree and Markab in his body. I have no idea why.’

**‘Anything else?’** ‘Well, he had some radiation traces in his blood, but nothing harmful. Otherwise, nothing I can think of.’

**‘Is John Doe human?’** ‘Honestly, I don’t know what race he is. He could be any of those races. Human genes are clearly dominant, though. He looks and acts just like a human.’

**‘Did anybody make a telepathic scan of Doe?’** ‘No, not that I’m aware of.’

**‘Did he say anything interesting?’** ‘No, mostly he was just confused. He could speak English and recognised common objects and tools, but didn’t remember anything about his identity.’

**‘Any idea why he left?’** ‘No, although I can tell you he wasn’t being held here. He was in an open room. Maybe during the night he recovered some of his memories. I doubt that, though. Amnesia doesn’t fade swiftly, but in bits. My guess is he had a troubling dream, or possibly had a single spark of recollection that sent him searching for more answers.’

**‘Is it possible he’s dangerous?’** ‘Only to himself. I did do a full scan of his body and he’s not a walking bomb or anything, if that’s what you’re worried about—and if he’s a saboteur, there are far better ways of sneaking onto Babylon 5 than floating in a lifepod and hoping for rescue. No, my guess is he’s very confused and lost right now and all I can do is hope he hasn’t wandered into Downbelow. Otherwise we’ll be identifying his body later on.’

**‘Can I look at his charts or other medical information?’** This requires a Diplomacy check (DC 17) unless the players are known to be friends of Dr. Franklin or someone else on the medical staff. Should Franklin agree, he hands over the medical scans, which confirm the information about the weird genetic markers and the radiation signature. If a player has a scan of the radiation from the pod and compares it to the radiation in Doe’s body—succeeding in a Medical check (DC 18) in the process—he discovers the two signatures do not match at all. Franklin is very puzzled by this and can offer no explanation for this seeming incongruity.

**‘Did you know the uniform he was wearing wasn’t his?’** ‘No, what makes you say that?’ If the players turn over this information to Dr. Franklin, he makes DNA scans of the hairs and other DNA evidence on the ragged clothing and quickly agrees with their analysis. So whose DNA was it on the uniform? The answer comes from the depths of the Medlab computers: a Belt Alliance petty officer named Alvin Seale, lost along with the BAS *Even Steven* in 2257.

**‘So is John Doe really Alvin Seale?’** ‘No, I don’t see how that’s possible. Yes, there are some weird genetic markers

in Doe’s DNA, so I can’t tell what race he really is, but if he were Seale, there’d at least be some common ground somewhere. No, I suspect the real Alvin Seale is long gone and for whatever reason, John Doe took his place. How, I don’t know—we probably won’t know until Doe gets his memory back and can tell us what happened on the *Even Steven*.’

**‘Did you notice that the radiation in the pod isn’t appropriate for the Comac system?’** ‘No...you mean it isn’t? How do you know that?’ The players can also get to this point by asking Franklin to check the pod’s radiation against that of the Comac system. If the players now show Franklin their scans of the pod he studies them carefully, comparing them to Comac’s known radiation, and makes the conclusion that John Doe definitely was *not* floating in Comac for years. So was he planted there? Franklin does not know, but urges the players to report this information to Security at once. Something strange is clearly going on.

**Other:** The players can ask any other questions they wish. If Franklin does not know the answers, he can check the medical scans to find out. For example, the players may wish to know if Doe had any brain damage (he did not) or some other condition (none of note). The Games Master can fill in such details as he wishes, since the answers are basically irrelevant.

## Encounter Three: The Search Begins

If the players have not taken the bait provided by the *Universe Today* article, the final method for getting them involved in this module is with a detailed search of the station for the missing man. By this point several days have passed since Doe vanished and enough additional information is unearthed to mark him as a potential threat. In particular, a detailed scan of the lifepod allows Dr. Franklin to make the connection that Doe was not really floating in space for years. Armed with that data, he discovers the fact that Doe’s Belt Alliance uniform is not really his. Now Garibaldi’s suspicious side kicks into high gear and he guesses that the man’s presence on Babylon 5 is not an accident. An all-points bulletin is posted, which is how the players are most likely to get involved. If the players are part of Station Security, they are assigned the job of finding Doe. Otherwise Garibaldi might hire their services for a few hundred credits. This amount later increases as further information about Mr. Doe is uncovered.

### So What Is Really Going On?

During the night before his disappearance, Mr. Doe (actually the Dilgar agent Lac’Zon, under cover of a carefully constructed false identity) experienced a telepathic awakening in which the time-delayed mental blocks placed



on his memory fell away. Now fully aware of his mission, he waited for a gap in the nurses' rounds and simply walked out of the facility. From there he stole a janitorial uniform from a laundry room and made his way into Downbelow, where he is attempting to locate any other Dilgar survivors lurking there. Of course, he is not asking specifically about Dilgar but about any mysterious individuals from an unknown race attempting to locate others of their kind. In the event this initial attempt fails, Lac'Zon's plan is to set up a monitoring facility where he can attempt to identify other Dilgar visitors to the station in the future.

One of the problems faced by Lac'Zon was actually getting on board the station. Since the Dilgar, sheltered as they were in their hidden outpost, had no information on how to create false IDs or decent cover stories, they instead took a much safer route. They surgically altered one of their own, implanted him with a telepathic block and placed him aboard a lifepod stolen from a Belt Alliance ship they had attacked and destroyed in the Tirrith system in 2257. Then they planted the lifepod in an orbit sure to bring it into sensor range of a known commercial freighter route that had Babylon 5 as its next stop. Since Lac'Zon had what would

seem to be a complete case of amnesia, it was hoped that he could simply vanish into Babylon 5's underworld.

So why did he not just fly directly to Babylon 5? The Dilgar did not want to take the risk. They had no identicards, so they could not just land and walk aboard. Stowing away on a ship would be sure to result in arrest. Lacking any knowledge of the station or its procedures, they came up with the best plan they could given the amount of information they had available. Now Lac'Zon is wandering about in Brown Sector in disguise, talking to people and surreptitiously scanning them in the process. He avoids Security men and otherwise looks just like any of hundreds of other lurkers.

### Starting the Investigation

After the players begin the investigation near Medlab—the last place where John Doe was sighted—the first thing they can learn is that one of the janitors lost a uniform in the laundry. Normally this would be a piece of data that falls under the Security radar, but because someone disappeared in the vicinity the theft report becomes more prominent. Discovering this information requires a Gather Information check (DC 15).

### Jamison Phillips

**5<sup>th</sup> Level Human Lurker**

**Hit Points:** 16

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 13 (+3 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +5 melee or +5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Lurker's Knowledge, Survivor's Luck, Multi-Skilled (Read Lips)

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 9

**Skills:** Bluff +7, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Read Lips +9, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +7

**Feats:** Endurance, Run, Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Focus (knife)

**Equipment:** Knife, two doses of Jump, five packs of legal medications, janitor's outfit and supplies, 100 credit chits

Jamison is one of those few lurkers who has managed to get a job and keep it for a reasonable period of time. In the process he has also established himself as a drug pusher, primarily selling the highly illegal substance known as Jump. So far he has been able to remain under the radar of Security, but constantly keeps his eye out for informers. Recently he has managed to save almost enough money to earn a passage back to Earth, so he is desperate enough to attack anyone who threatens his chances to finally escape this damned station.

### Drug Addicts (2)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Level Human Lurkers**

**Hit Points:** 10

**Initiative:** +9 (+5 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 15 (+5 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +1 melee or +6 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Lurker's Knowledge, Survivor's Luck

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +5, Will -1

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 20 (modified +5 by Jump), Con 10, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 9

**Skills:** Bluff +7, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +7

**Feats:** Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Run

**Equipment:** Five knives

These two lurkers are hopelessly addicted to Jump and in fact have just consumed a dose they purchased from Jamison for 50 credits each. When they are not high they amuse themselves by tossing darts, knives and other weapons. In combat they will throw their first four knives, saving the last one for melee combat. If Jamison is defeated they throw one final knife and flee into the bowels of Downbelow.

From this they know that the individual in question is dressed as a janitor. Allow the players to make several more Gather Information checks as they search the various decks for the missing Mr. Doe, but regardless of the rolls their searches are unsuccessful. No one matching Doe's description has been noticed on Green, Red or Blue Sectors. Eventually the hunt will proceed to Brown Sector.

As soon as the players venture into Downbelow they notice a janitor matching Mr. Doe's description (tall, bald and nervous-looking). He is not Mr. Doe, though, but Jamison Phillips, a down-and-out lurker who is trying to earn passage back to Earth by selling drugs on the side. He is presently talking with a man and a woman dressed in shabby clothes, both of whom seem to be shaking or shivering for some reason. If the players are wearing Security uniforms, the two nervous-looking types flee while Jamison dumps the contents of two small vials into a bottle of cleaning fluid. This action can be noticed on a Spot check (DC 12). Jamison claims that he was just preparing to clean a spot on the nearby wall, but a suspicious player can take the vials away and examine them closely. A Medical check (DC 18), coupled with the proper equipment, identifies the liquid residue as that of the illegal drug Jump (see *The Earth Alliance Fact Book* p.184). After this the players have Jamison at their mercy.

If the players are not wearing Security uniforms or some other recognisable badge of authority, Jamison is immediately hostile as the players approach. If they say even one word to him he draws a knife and demands they turn around and go back the way they came. His two drugged-out associates, however, interpret his weapon differently and attack, resulting in a sudden melee.

If the players have already met Mr. Doe earlier in the scenario, they can recognise that Phillips is not Mr. Doe on a Spot check (DC 22); otherwise they must contact Security later to verify the truth. If they have any images of Phillips handy they can make a comparison during the fight, but this requires a standard action. Jamison stops fighting only if the players convince him this is a case of mistaken identity—this requires a Diplomacy or Intimidate check opposed by Jamison's Sense Motive.

After the fight, the players will easily discover the two doses of Jump if they search Jamison's overalls. Depending on the players' affiliations, they can either report Jamison's crime or keep the drugs for themselves. Tracking down the drug supplier can be a side scenario in itself or left up to Security to undertake at a later time.

If the players end the fight with the goods on Jamison, he answers their questions truthfully. He has not met Lac'Zon, but if the players mention a janitor's uniform he does remember seeing an unconscious man in a nearby hallway with a janitor outfit draped over him. Jamison agrees to

show them to that spot in exchange for his freedom. If the players agree, he leads them there. If they disagree, he keeps his mouth shut, although the information can be dragged out of him with an Intimidate check opposed by Sense Motive, or through telepathy. The players can also find the site on a Search check (DC 25), but must succeed on the first attempt or the unconscious man will wake up and leave the area.

If the players do find the unconscious man, he has an obvious bump on his head. A Medical check (DC 18) wakes him up, or the players can just wait half an hour for him to recover. The man's name is Ricardo Fentis, and he is not actually a resident of Downbelow. He works in Hydroponics, but has a few friends he visits occasionally in Brown Sector. This is the first time he has been mugged because, as he freely admits, he usually carries a PPG. Whoever robbed him took not only his clothes and money, but that weapon as well.

At this point the search for John Doe enters the next phase. However, in the meantime there is a chance that he might have been encountered accidentally. In fact, it is entirely possible that someone ran into him without even knowing who they were talking to.

## Encounter Four: Accidental Encounters

While the players are busy searching for John Doe, Lac'Zon is meandering around Downbelow, talking to as many people as he can but avoiding Security or anyone else who looks like an authority figure. He reasons that any Dilgar hiding in the bowels of Babylon 5 will not risk their anonymity by taking any high-profile jobs or otherwise singling themselves out.

Generally, the players are not likely to encounter Lac'Zon accidentally. The only chance of this happening is if they are as yet unaware of his presence or importance on the station. For example, if the players have not been a part of Modules One or Two but have a lurker in their group, he might bump into this mysterious, unnamed figure as part of his regular wanderings. If the group is split, with some members operating under official channels (in Security or Medlab, for example), they might know about John Doe and his disappearance, while another player—not yet briefed on Doe's situation—runs into him separately. The Games Master could even run both segments as independent encounters, neither side realising that what they do is connected until they jointly discuss the matter later on.

Other than this, those who encounter Doe are more likely to be Non-Player Characters unaware of his true identity. If interviewed or telepathically scanned they will be able to describe their meeting with the mysterious, unnamed figure



in the gloomy halls of Brown Sector. Generally, finding an individual who has met with Doe requires a Gather Information check (DC 19). The players must specifically describe Doe and provide images of him, which they can get from Dr. Franklin's records. If they just ask 'Did you see anybody wandering around aimlessly, or who lost their memory?' the answer will always be 'no.'

In any event, an encounter with Doe always occurs in passing. Doe is wearing a janitor's outfit with a hood pulled up over his head. At first he says something like 'Nice day, isn't it?' and then continues with a few other innocuous questions. He does so in a way that will preserve his cover story if captured—in other words, so he can still claim that he is an amnesiac. The questions are of these sorts: 'Do you know anyone of a race you can't identify? Is there anyone on board with the traits of several races? Have you met anyone making similar inquiries?' Presumably, he supposes, another Dilgar agent would be hidden in a manner similar to himself. He has little hope of success in this line of questioning but it is the first step in his plan.

In addition to his questions, Lac'Zon attempts to telepathically scan anyone with whom he comes into contact. He tries to physically touch them in one way or another, usually by shaking hands during his introduction—a human custom that he has embraced wholeheartedly. The purpose of the scan is to detect any trace of the Dilgar language in the person's thoughts, and to implant a single Dilgar word (*Shara*, a basic greeting) in their brain to see if there is any reaction. He performs these actions so skilfully that the target is generally unaware of any telepathic contact. However, if the individual being questioned is a telepath, he will recognise the attempt at once and can decide what to do and how to respond. No non-player lurkers will have this ability, so he would have to meet a telepathic player—a statistical unlikelihood.

After meeting Lac'Zon, the word he leaves in the person's mind can be remembered on an Intelligence check (DC 10) within one hour of the meeting. If the check fails or more than an hour passes, the individual remembers that something was there—an image or word of some kind—but does not know what it was. The Dilgar word *Shara* will not be recognised by anyone in Downbelow, of course. Locating a Non-Player Character who has both met Doe and thought to write the word down requires a Gather Information check (DC 24).

If *Shara* is simply entered into a computer for investigation, at least a dozen proper names and places pop up. Only if the player specifically searches language databases and succeeds in a Computer Use (DC 24) check can he discover that this is the Dilgar word for 'hello'. It also happens to be a Drazi word meaning 'furry petal' but has no meaning in any other tongue.

## Encounter Five: Showdown with Lac'Zon

As the search continues, Dr. Franklin has been busy in Medlab. In fact, he concludes a detailed study of Mr. Doe's physiology, providing this information to Security, who relays it (eventually) to the players. The information includes the following points:

1. He now knows for a fact that the mysterious visitor has been surgically altered, although this was performed to a level of perfection so high that he didn't notice it until his fifth detailed study of the patient's physiological scans.
2. He can now identify the three other DNA combinations in John Doe's blood—Krish, Mitoc, and Dilgar.
3. Finally, and most worrisome, he knows that most of the DNA residue is inert—that is to say, it has no real purpose in Mr. Doe's blood, except to confuse medical scans. The subject is clearly of one of the three races that were most difficult to identify. Since the Mitoc and Dilgar are both dead races, the apparently obvious conclusion is that this person is Krish. However, the Krish are a race of flightless birds with vestigial wings for arms and obvious avian features—there is no feasible way that simple surgical modifications could transform one of their people into a human-like form. One might as well ask a Gaim to look human simply through plastic surgery!

With that in mind, both Garibaldi and Sheridan focus their attentions on the most dangerous and worrisome possibility—John Doe is a Dilgar. Finding him is now vital, and word has already leaked out that a Dilgar might be loose on Babylon 5. Some of the alien races are mobilising their own 'hunt teams,' in particular the Narns and Drazi. Worse, anyone even remotely resembling Doe is being accosted, drawing security teams away from the actual search.

With this in mind, the reward for Doe's capture is doubled. However, Garibaldi now wants the man brought in alive for interrogation. He also asks the players to conduct their search independently of Security. He's afraid that if Security gets involved, one of these other 'hunt teams' will try to take him out before they can get him back to lockup. In other words, the players are on their own from this point forward. They'll need to capture Doe and bring him in quietly, in such a way that observers don't recognise who he is. Exactly how this is done is up to the players—but first, they have to actually go through the motions of finding and catching their quarry.

## Tracking Down Lac'Zon

With security teams actively hunting for him, Lac'Zon goes to ground. He makes his way to Brown Seven and holes up in a power relay chamber. One of the doors to this normally restricted room has been forced, a sure clue that someone is inside who shouldn't be there. However, the players won't be able to just stumble across this room without some help.

Fortunately, as soon as the hunt for Doe escalates, their very next Gather Information check (DC 14) puts them in contact with a Drazi lurker named Elshadaz. He's an elderly Drazi with a bent spine and tattered scales. For 25 credits, he'll tell the players where John Doe is. The players can either pay the money, Intimidate it out of him (DC 20), or use telepathy. Either way, the only thing Elshadaz knows is that he saw someone who looked like Doe sneaking into Brown Seven. A telepathic scan reports he's telling the truth and a deep scan gets the telepath a good look at the face of the man Elshadaz saw—a dead ringer for John Doe. If the players are kind to Elshadaz, or make a deep scan of his mind, they can also learn that he's also told this same information to others—a group of Drazi looking to capture Doe for their own purposes.

This clue should lead the players to head to Brown Seven next. There are three basic ways the players can find Lac'Zon from this point:

**Using Frankie:** If the players have a good relationship with the Frankie the Rat, resident crime lord of Brown Seven (see Module One), they can go to him and ask for help. Frankie is aware of the current hunt for John Doe and that groups other than Security are roaming about looking for him. Frankie is *not* happy about his turf being invaded and wants Doe found, if indeed he is located on Brown Seven at all. Thus he will do whatever he can to help the players in their quest. If the players give him a communicator tuned to their frequency, he will call them when he knows something. Twelve hours later, if the players have not already found Lac'Zon, he lets them know someone matching John Doe's description was seen moving through a corridor fairly close to the Courtyard. After that the players can make a Search check of that area (DC 18) to find the door that Lac'Zon forced open. Frankie will tell them the area contains a power relay and is usually kept carefully locked—even his own people will not go inside because of the high voltage. He also mentions two other details: no ordinary lurker could force that lock, and there is another entrance to that room through another corridor.

**Old Enemies:** If the players made an enemy of Frankie the Rat, he will oppose them as they search Brown Seven. Frankie still wants Doe found and the hunt called off, but he definitely does not want the players to be the ones to make the big score.

Depending on the whims of the Games Master and the level of anger Frankie has built up against the players as a result of the encounters in Module One, this could manifest in several ways:

*Aid & Comfort:* Frankie could provide some of his 'rat guards' to help the Drazi in the showdown with Lac'Zon. Use the stats listed in Encounter One to add some additional firepower to the Drazi force.

*Pointing Out Lac'Zon:* Obviously, once Frankie's guards notice John Doe skulking about, he will be sure to tell the Drazi instead of the players.

*False Information:* Frankie might have a couple of his men, planted in the guise of lurkers, give the players false information. A 'helpful' lurker could tell the players that Doe was seen on the opposite side of Brown Seven or went to a different level of Downbelow. This should be done in such a way that the players have a chance to discover the deception—a Sense Motive check (DC 15), for example, reveals that the man is lying.

*Outright Attack:* If the players were particularly rude to Frankie in their last meeting, he might well set up an ambush. Use any one of Frankie's surviving henchmen along with several guards and set up an encounter in the halls or rooms of Brown Seven. A henchman who was particularly embarrassed by the players might even set up his own ambush without Frankie's knowledge, even if he is otherwise friendly to the players. Such an encounter could be arranged through a 'friendly informer' as described in the previous paragraph.

**Setting Up Surveillance:** The players cannot possibly search every corner of Brown Seven, but they know that if John Doe is really there he will have to come out sometime for food and water. To this end they can place lookouts or even cameras to watch for him. Doe is too cautious to be spotted by hunters directly but is vulnerable to the camera trick. If the players do this, allow anyone watching the screens to make a Spot check (DC 25) every four hours. If they make the check on one of the first three attempts, they notice Doe moving through a corridor in a section of Brown Seven that is mostly uninhabited. After that they need a Search check (DC 18) as described previously. If they do not make the Spot checks, on the 16<sup>th</sup> hour they notice the Drazi (see below) gathering in the hall near the relay room. Clearly they are on to something.

**Watching the Hunters:** As the players meander around on Brown Seven they will quickly notice an unusual number of Drazi wandering about the level (they might already know about these hunters from their encounter with Elshadaz).



The last time the players were here, they noticed that humans populated Brown Seven almost exclusively, so the presence of Drazis is very unusual. A Spot check (DC 14) tells any observer that the Drazis are quite actively casting their eyes about, studying every lurker carefully, sometimes even glancing down at images cradled carefully in their scaly fingers. If the players have no other resources available to aid in their search, they might follow these hunters about, hoping to follow them to Doe should they locate him first. After 16 hours of searching, one of the Drazis finds the door to Lac'Zon's hideout and radios the others. Anyone shadowing them can make a Listen check (DC 15). If they can understand the Drazi tongue, they hear this: 'I think I know where he hides! A door to a power relay room is broken into. None of these scum have the brains to do this. My location is Section Beta, Relay Room Two. Get here! Now!'

## Capturing Lac'Zon

The main problem with grabbing Lac'Zon is not the agent himself but the Drazis looking for him. While the players have been busy, so too have these hunters. The Drazis are not stupid. They have noticed the players and are keeping an eye on them, just as they too are being watched. As soon as the players make a purposeful move anywhere, the Drazis follow them. Furthermore, the Drazis have a technician with them who is tapping into their communications. If the players are using any sort of wireless radios—to talk with Frankie or with each other—the Drazis are able to intercept these messages. This will lead them to the power relay room, where they will interrupt the showdown.

Exactly how the Drazis get involved depends upon the circumstances. Basically, there are three ways this could happen:

## The Hunters

**3<sup>rd</sup> Level Drazi Soldiers (4)**

**Hit Points:** 15

**Initiative:** +4 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 13 (+3 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +7 melee or +6 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Covering Fire, DR 5 (3 from armour)

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +3, Will -1

**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 6, Cha 11

**Skills:** Climb +9, Jump +9

**Feats:** Dense Scales, Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Focus (hunter's blade), Weapon Focus (PPG)

**Equipment:** PPG Model 10, hunter's armour, hunter's blade

These Drazis are part of an elite 'hunt team' that specialises in finding people or objects and retrieving them using any means necessary. They will stop at nothing to get their hands on Lac'Zon—dead or alive. If the players get in their way, a fight is inevitable.

## The Hunt Leader

**4<sup>th</sup> Level Drazi Officer**

**Hit Points:** 16

**Initiative:** +8 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 14 (+4 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +7 melee or +8 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Covering Fire, DR 4 (3 from armour)

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 13

**Skills:** Computer Use +8, Sense Motive +6, Intimidate +8, Spot +6

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Focus (PPG)

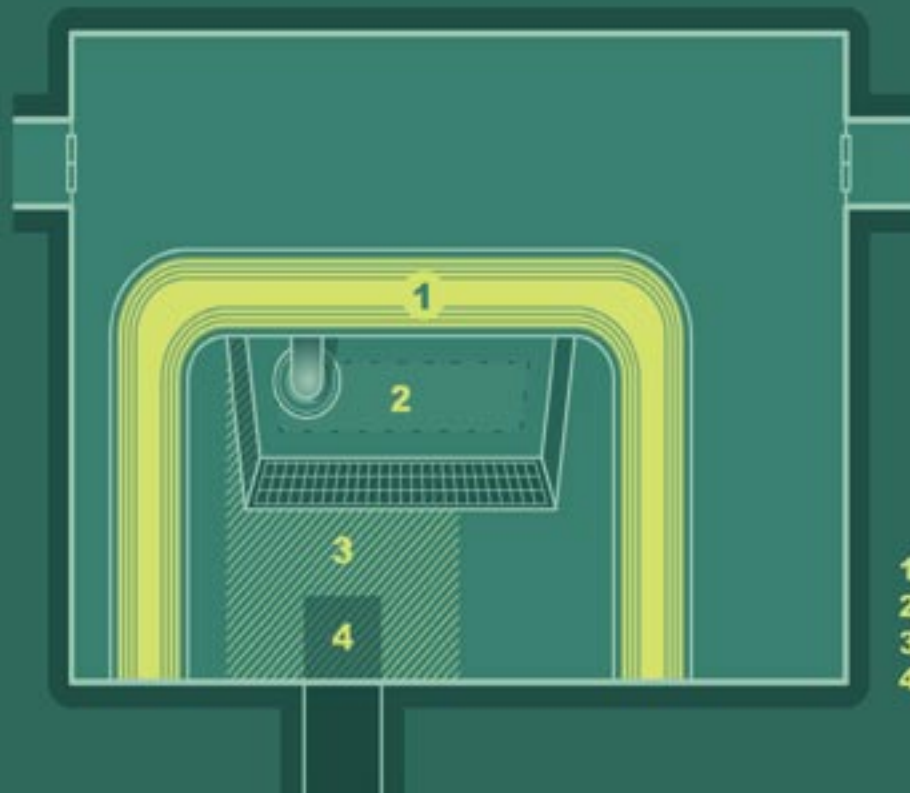
**Equipment:** PPG Model 10, hunter's armour, hunter's blade

This is the hunt team's leader. He uses his PPG exclusively while his soldiers make the main attack. He is not cowardly, however, and should the opportunity come he will gladly enter melee with the rest of his troops.

**Hunter's Blade:** Drazi hunters are specially trained in the use of this wickedly serrated blade, a rare weapon indeed. Non-Drazis treat it as an exotic weapon. The jagged knife has a cost of 350 credits, damage 1d6, critical 18-20/x2, size medium, weight 5 lb. and damage type piercing.

**Hunter's Armour:** Drazi hunters employ this special armour designed to fit their stocky frames and work in concert with their body scales. Formed of interlocking metal plates covered with a cured leather cover, it provides significant protection in melee combat. Because it is so heavy the armour is rarely used by non-Drazis and those who do wear it suffer from reduced manoeuvrability. Statistics are as follows: Cost 500 credits, weight 30 lb., DR 3 (4 against slashing or bludgeoning weapons, 5 against piercing attacks). Wearing this armour reduces the owner's Dexterity by two and speed by five feet; these penalties are doubled for non-Drazis.

## Power Room



- 1 Electrified wire trap
- 2 Power terminal
- 3 Electrified floor
- 4 Escape vent

**If the Drazzi get there first**, they will have tripped the first trap. By the time the players arrive they have Lac'Zon cornered and are about to take him into custody. As soon as the group shows up the Drazzi attack them without hesitation. In this case Lac'Zon fires on the Drazzi and avoids shooting the players, but as soon as the Drazzi are defeated he has no problem attacking the players if they insist on trying to take him into custody.

**If the players get there first**, they will have to deal with the first trap on their own. After that, as Lac'Zon starts firing at them, the Drazzi show up behind the group and attack at once, putting the players in a crossfire. The players could, of course, turn the tables if they suspect the Drazzi are following, and could be waiting in ambush.

**If the Drazzi are forewarned about the players' destination**, they will enter the relay room by blowing open the sealed second door on the opposite side. Anyone standing within 15 feet of the door must make a Reflex save (DC 14) or suffer 1d6 explosive damage and 1d6 nonlethal (concussion) damage. The sheer shock of this sudden, unexpected twist forces everyone in the room—Lac'Zon included—to make a

Will save (DC 14) or be stunned for one round. After this the Drazzi pour in, attacking both the players and Lac'Zon with abandon (and hopefully with surprise on their side).

## The Power Room

Lac'Zon is hiding inside a power relay room. The room is about 40 feet wide and 30 feet long, with a series of power terminals near the centre. There are doors on each of the shorter walls. As a bolthole, Lac'Zon has opened up one of the ventilation tunnels, but he has not entered yet because he knows from previous explorations that there are traps inside. As you will remember from Module One, Frankie the Rat makes sure that nobody can sneak around the hidden shafts that surround his private little slice of Babylon 5, and Lac'Zon does not wish to challenge the crime lord's trap-making skills. At least not until he is desperate. Should the Dilgar operative be seriously challenged in his lair, he flees through the ventilation duct. This could result in a running battle within the shafts of Babylon 5, with Lac'Zon slowed in his flight by his need to deactivate or slip cautiously past each trap.



## Lac'Zon

3<sup>rd</sup> Level Dilgar Agent, 5<sup>th</sup> Level Telepath (P10)

**Hit Points:** 20

**Initiative:** +1 (+1 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 11 (+1 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +6/+1 melee or +6/+1 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Security Systems, Sneak Attack +1d6

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 13

**Skills:** Bluff +6, Computer Use +12, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +9, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +6, Knowledge (telepathy) +10, Listen +6, Sense Motive +6, Speak Language (Brakiri, Centauri, Dilgar, English, Narn), Technical (mechanical) +10, Telepathy +9

**Feats:** Endurance, Far Telepathy, Improved Defensive Block, Iron Will, Synergy

**Telepathic Abilities:** Accidental Scan, Danger Sense, Daze, Mind Shield, Sense Telepathy, Warning

**Equipment:** Club, PPG

Lac'Zon was sent to Babylon 5 to try to locate others of his kind and, if that failed, to set up a listening post on the station. His main goal at this stage is to remain hidden and avoid combat. If he engages in combat he tries using Daze to stun the most dangerous target and use sneak attacks for maximum damage. If a player does get to melee range with Lac'Zon and stays there despite the electrical trap underfoot, the Dilgar agent uses his Daze ability and flees into the ventilation shaft. He also runs if he is about to be overwhelmed or if his PPG runs out of shots. Should he be cornered, he battles with telepathy and his club until subdued. He does not, however, commit suicide. He does have one final card to play if he does get captured.

In any case, Lac'Zon remains in hiding when either the players or the Drazi hunters enter the room. He waits until they set off his first main trap before popping up from 3/4 cover to start shooting. Except as noted previously, he considers anyone who enters the room as his enemy.

There are two traps in the room, each tied directly into the power relay system. The first is a ten-foot strip of thin wires stretched in a hemisphere ahead of his hiding place, around the edges of the machines. Lac'Zon tries to wait until as many invaders as possible are standing on the wires before activating the trap. The wires are laid down amidst some other cables so they do not look out of place—a player in the room must make a Spot check (DC 25) to notice something out of the ordinary. When Lac'Zon activates the trap, electricity surges and sparks, scoring 3d6 electrical damage

to everyone standing on the wires. A Fortitude save (DC 17) halves the damage. Once the electricity is flowing, constant arcing reveals the trap's location so it can be avoided in the future, but the power only stays on for five rounds before something critical burns out. A player can also deactivate the trap by reaching Lac'Zon's current location and taking a standard action to throw the switch. He can also spend a full-round action to study the machines in the room, and if so, a Technical (mechanical) check (DC 21) locates a vulnerable spot along the floor. Five points of damage scored on that position (DV 10, no DR) shorts out the electricity and deactivates the trap.

If this is not enough, Lac'Zon has another trap prepared as well. The five-foot square on which he stands—next to the escape vent on the wall—is surrounded by electrified floor sections. Anyone coming close enough to attack him with melee weapons takes 1d6+1 electrical damage (half is nonlethal damage) for each round they stand on an adjacent square. There is no save against this effect and there is no easy way to deactivate it. The energy is tapped directly from the main power grid. Players need some way to completely deactivate all of Brown Seven's power before this trap stops functioning.

## Encounter Six: Interlude

If Lac'Zon is killed in the fighting, this module is all but over. It is still possible for the players to gather information leading them to an eventual meeting with the other Dilgar, but this requires some significant insight. The rest of this module will assume Lac'Zon is still alive at this point.

After Lac'Zon is brought back alive, Dr. Franklin performs some tests to discover the Dilgar agent's true nature. Lac'Zon is also locked up in a private room with a round-the-clock guard at the door—for his own safety as well as to keep him from getting away. Both Mr. Garibaldi and Talia Winters then interrogate him at their leisure. The players can also join in if they wish.

Attempting to telepathically scan Lac'Zon is fruitless. He is a low-level telepath with the ability to 'turn off' his brain if he senses a telepathic invasion. The moment a deep scan begins he simply keels over and his mind becomes blank. This lasts for about half an hour until he reawakens. He will use this same technique if truth drugs are used upon him. Meanwhile, if interrogated normally, he reveals only that his real name is Lac'Zon and his reasons for coming to Babylon 5 are his own. He has not committed a crime, other than violating immigration laws. Defending himself from attack was not against the law. He demands to be set free at once, even if it means deportation.

About six hours after Lac'Zon's capture, Dr. Franklin finally discovers that the former Mr. Doe is actually a Dilgar. This has been suspected all along, of course, but now the truth is revealed—all the other genetic markers in Lac'Zon's blood and tissue are carefully planted deceptions. The agent does not admit to his true nature until formal medical evidence is presented to him and even then he simply insists that being Dilgar is not against the law.

Captain Sheridan, of course, knows full well what happened the last time a Dilgar showed up on Babylon 5—the League almost tore the station apart. He has no intention of allowing this to happen again. The only people who know Lac'Zon is actually a Dilgar are Sheridan, Garibaldi, Franklin and of course the players themselves. Therefore Sheridan decides the best course of action is to tell a little white lie. He orders the players, and everyone else involved, to keep their mouths shut about Lac'Zon's true nature. Then he issues a press release stating that the 'supposed Dilgar agent' was actually an Alvin Seale, a former Belt Alliance trader and now an unfortunate amnesiac. Furthermore, he is a veteran of the Dilgar War, during which he suffered horribly as a victim of Dilgar wartime atrocities. That is why he has so many other racial markers in his blood. The poor man is deserving only of pity, not persecution. The masses buy this explanation readily.

Once this fire is put out, the storm of controversy dies down. In fact, most of the populace of Babylon 5 is ashamed of their actions when they reflect back on the past few days. If anything, though, the plan works too well. The people of Babylon 5 will begin to wonder why Sheridan is still holding this 'Alvin Seale' if he is really as harmless as everybody says. Thus Sheridan decides to let the man go. He does, however, do two things. First, he plants not one but two transmitters on Lac'Zon—one on his back, between the shoulder blades, in a spot he cannot easily see or reach; the second inside his body in the form of a bug consumed with one of the prisoner's meals.

The second thing Sheridan does is hire the players to keep an eye on Lac'Zon. He knows he cannot use formal Security guards, so instead he uses a few trustworthy civilians. In addition to their job of watching the Dilgar's actions, the players are tasked with making friends with him and finding out what is really going on. He informs the players that Lac'Zon has a sub-dermal homing device on his back and lets them know how to track it should he get away. Sheridan does not tell them about the second, backup transmitter lodged in the Dilgar agent's gut, however. This is his insurance policy should something go wrong.

If the players are affiliated with EarthForce or Station Security, this becomes a semi-permanent assignment. If they are independent contractors, Sheridan agrees to pay

them 50 credits per day (each) to undertake this mission—a princely sum. They are, however, responsible for all their own expenses. Sheridan suspects that this Dilgar is not the only one still out there, and wants to find out what they are planning. Thus he gives the players tremendous latitude to do whatever they feel necessary to achieve this goal. He does not want the Dilgar dead—he just wants information.

When Lac'Zon is released from prison into the players' care he is totally baffled. Quite frankly, he expected to be killed, or at the very least deported from the station. The fact that he can walk around without being accosted amazes him. He makes no attempt to escape his watchdogs (the players) and cooperates with them without complaint. He still does not explain what he is doing on Babylon 5, but if the players do not stop him he proceeds with his original mission, which is finding a place to hole up and create a listening post by tapping into the station's computer network. The fact that the players let him do this without interference is mind-boggling, as far as Lac'Zon is concerned. If they help him find a job and get his own cabin, this will leave him all but stunned.

Of course, he is not stupid. He suspects something is going on, but he does not care. As long as he can proceed with his mission, he does not even try to search for the tracking devices he is pretty sure have been planted in or on his person. Instead he continues hacking merrily through Babylon 5's computers. If the players wish, they can set up counter-hacking or monitoring programs to observe his online activities. This requires a contested Computer Use check, but Lac'Zon does not mind if they succeed. As long as he can undertake his search, he does not care who is watching. In fact, if he had known he could have gotten away with this without any resistance from Security, he would have come right out and asked in the first place.

Lac'Zon continues working on his search for several days. The players can watch him all they want and even become friends if they so wish. After a while the Dilgar agent even explains what he is doing. He says he is looking for more of his kind who might have escaped the 'purging' and are still in hiding. He even goes so far as to thank the players for helping him and for keeping his secret to themselves. Inwardly, of course, he is not quite convinced the players are really his friends—but he is good at keeping his true thoughts to himself.

### The Secondary Mission

Meanwhile Theresa Cross and Alison Fernandez arrive on Babylon 5. For once Theresa does not have a mission for the players, but is here to try to establish some other connections with potential allies in her fight against IPX. By now Alison is firmly convinced that IPX is her enemy as well, so she visits her friends (the players) to let them in on what is going



on. She hopes the players will turn on IPX also, seeing as how they have been deceived all along just as she was. In the process, she asks what they have been up to.

If the players explain their current mission, she takes that information back to Theresa. Even if they do not, Theresa still hears about it through her own network. It is very likely that she will not actually know Lac'Zon is a Dilgar—unless the players fill Alison in on this detail—but even so, he clearly has his own agenda. Is he one of IPX's tools? Or is he a representative of some other organisation? In the former case Theresa wants Lac'Zon destroyed; in the latter she wants to sign him up as an ally.

Thus when Lac'Zon announces that his work on Babylon 5 is done, she has no problem agreeing to loan the players the *Liberty's Fortune* to take him back to his people. However, Theresa gives Alison secret instructions. If Lac'Zon turns out to be associated with IPX, he and whomever he meets with are to be killed. On the other hand, if he is indeed a representative of some other group, Alison is to establish permanent contact with him. After all, Theresa needs all the eyes and ears she can find. Who knows when someone like that might come in handy?

Of course, if the players have access to their own ship they may not need the *Liberty*, but even so, Alison will still try to join them on their mission. Also, should the players ask permission of Sheridan or Garibaldi to allow Lac'Zon to leave Babylon 5, they agree. As long as the players keep an eye on him and find out what the Dilgar are really up to, where Lac'Zon goes is immaterial.

Note that Lac'Zon, in his guise as Alvin Seale, spends about three weeks at his listening post before determining that he is finished on Babylon 5 for now. During this period, in addition to Theresa and Alison's arrival, any number of other events may occur. The flow of the campaign may take the players away from the Dilgar for a while, but eventually he will decide it is time to go.

## Encounter Seven: Meeting the Dilgar

When he does, he sends a coded message off into deep space. If the players are monitoring his activities electronically, they pick up on this with a Computer Use check (DC 14) and can make a recording of the message. Decoding it requires a Computer Use check (DC 25). The message reads: 'Mission complete. Meet in ten solars as arranged.' Any player who can speak Dilgar or thinks to search the Dilgar language files knows that a solar is a Dilgar day—about 1.2 standard days.

Lac'Zon intends to hire a ship to take him to Mitoc, a devastated world the Dilgar virtually destroyed during the Invasion. If the players offer to take him there, he will accept their offer readily. If they refuse to let him leave, he expresses regret and then tries to leave anyway. He continues to try until either he escapes or the players are forced to lock him up, at which point he determines that his mission is a failure and commits suicide.

Should the players agree to let him go on his own, he climbs aboard a chartered civilian craft and flies off. Naturally an Earth Alliance ship shadows him during the journey, following the tracking devices implanted in and on his body. As the players later learn, those tracers show quite clearly that he visits Mitoc as planned, but that is where he disappears. The trackers go offline shortly after his arrival on the dead world and no one knows where he goes after that. The module is basically over at this point.

If the players agree to take him to Mitoc, Lac'Zon collects his belongings and departs on whatever schedule they arrange, so long as it is within a day or so. If they need more time, he agrees as long as he has an opportunity to send another message with an update on his progress. Theresa Cross puts the *Liberty's Fortune* at the players' disposal, with Caitlin Schulz as pilot and Alison Fernandez going along for the ride.

The trip takes eight days, passing through Narn space on its way to Mitoc. The ship is challenged at the Kotak jump transfer point, but the Narns there accept Caitlin's explanation that they are couriers bound for League territory and let them pass. The journey through Sin'talith and Gamma 7 is uneventful. After just more than a week, the ship arrives in the Mitoc system.

What the players do not know—but may well suspect—is that the *Liberty's Fortune* is being followed. Captain Sheridan has notified EarthForce of the Dilgar agent's movements, and the Hyperion cruiser *Demeter* has been sent to shadow the *Liberty*. Earth is not the only one with their eyes on Lac'Zon, however. The suspicious Drazi, annoyed by the failure of their hunt team in Brown Seven, have learned through their own sources about the mission to Mitoc. They do not have a way to track the Dilgar agent but they do have a ship in the area, the Sunhawk-class battlecruiser *Tol'kani* (*Fist of Death*). The Sunhawk has been sent to Mitoc, where it hides on one of the planet's two moons and awaits the arrival of the *Liberty's Fortune*.

On or about Day Eight, the *Liberty* arrives. Caitlin turns the nose of the ship towards the planet called Mitoc, actually the third world in the system, and after an hour's flight the little pinnacle enters orbit.

*Through the viewing ports you can see the blackened shell of a world. It is hard to believe this was once an Earth-like planet filled with life. All that is left is a scarred land and dried-up oceans. Even the atmosphere looks dark and foreboding. Yet even through the haze you can see a few green and blue specks on this ruined globe. Life, perhaps, is slowly returning to Mitoc. Though it may take decades or even centuries, perhaps one day the whole planet will be habitable again.*

*As you mull that over, Caitlin receives a signal. Lac'Zon perks up at once and rushes to the communications console, where he types in a coded response. A moment later Caitlin announces that she has a fix on a landing beacon. Without hesitation the Liberty's Fortune noses towards the tortured planet below and begins its descent.*

*You all strap in and prepare for landing. Caitlin manages the trip with easy skill. After ten minutes or so the ship slows, straightens and settles down to a halt. You look out the windows at a ragged, rocky landscape. Dust kicked up by the wind swirls in miniature dust-devils, obscuring the view beyond a few hundred yards. At the fringes of your vision you see a glint of metal. Slightly closer, a prefabricated shack stands, keeping a lonely vigil amidst the debris.*

External sensors reveal that the atmosphere is sufficient that pressure suits are not required, but breather masks are recommended. Radiation levels are also acceptable. Anyone without a mask finds the air thin, forcing a Fortitude save (DC 14) every ten minutes. Failure indicates the player becomes fatigued until he has breathed ordinary air for at least an hour.

Lac'Zon insists that he is in the presence of friends and asks for a mask. He exits and heads for the little shack. If the players follow they notice that the glint of metal behind the building is actually a shuttle. The make is unfamiliar, but a Technical (space travel) check (DC 25) positively identifies it as a Dilgar design.

Inside the shack, which is little more than a 25-foot square area designed for use as a shelter, there are four other Dilgar waiting. They are armed, but pay little attention to the players. They are too busy embracing and congratulating Lac'Zon, speaking quickly in the Dilgar tongue. Finally they turn to introductions. The four Dilgar are Fol'Tan, Ti'Shal, Re'Thas and Jal'Maris, the latter of whom seems to be the leader. All of them understand and speak English, using that language for all conversations unless they need to speak privately.

Jal'Maris thanks the players for their help while the other three begin scanning Lac'Zon. Jal'Maris listens to the agent's explanation while nodding thoughtfully. Meanwhile the scientists discover the tracking device on Lac'Zon's

## The Mitoc

The Mitoc were once a peaceful race of explorers. They are nocturnal, opossum-like creatures with prehensile tails, well suited for arboreal life. Most of their cities were built among the tall trees and forests of their verdant homeworld, which shares the name of their race.

Although pacifistic by nature, the Mitoc did not share the peaceful view of the universe suggested by their neighbours, the Abbai and Krish. The Mitoc knew they would have to develop a strong defence in order to survive and set about to do so as soon as they could. The only nearby race which would provide weapons to them was the Vree and what those shrewd traders sold was ancient plasma and particle technology that most other races considered obsolete. Still, it was the start of what the Mitoc hoped would be a strong defence program and they viewed with pride their first (and what would soon be their only) ship class, the Jomic frigate. From such a small start they planned a navy that would soon be respected in the region and could even extend to aid their friends the Krish when needed.

Unfortunately the Dilgar Invasion came well before the Mitoc were ready. Upon seeing the huge armada of Dilgar warships approaching, most of the Jomic-class ships turned and fled for the safety of hyperspace. After reforming there into a small but scrappy fleet, they returned to their system several days later to see what, if anything, they could do. The sight they saw horrified them—dozens of Dilgar ships bombarding their world with nuclear bombs and mass drivers! Unable to do anything to stop the carnage, the Mitoc fleet attempted to get help from their nearby neighbours, but failed, finding the Cascor and Brakiri under constant attack, the Abbai bottled up and the Krish all but dead.

The little fleet headed to Bestine just hours ahead of the Dilgar invasion force, and were sheltered there by the Descari. After Earth forces liberated Bestine the frigates returned home to find a smoking ruin. Every form of land-based life larger than an insect had been wiped out by the constant bombardment and plagues set loose by the Dilgar. Mitoc was effectively a dead world. The few survivors of the Mitoc race now live in small, primitive villages amidst the few habitable places on the planet.



back and quickly remove it. Then they announce that there is another beacon inside the agent's body. They need a few minutes to remove it, which they begin to do using a tube inserted through Lac'Zon's throat. He puts himself in a trance while this is done. Meanwhile Jal'Maris can answer whatever questions the players have. Here are some possibilities. Items marked with an asterisk (\*) are partial truths or outright lies that can be detected by an opposed Bluff/Sense Motive check.

**'Are you really Dilgar?'** 'Yes, we represent a small band of Dilgar survivors. We've been in hiding since the war. You'll understand if I don't explain where, of course.'

**'Who are you, though?'** 'We were scientists, not warriors.\* Perhaps the fact that we weren't military is what enabled us to escape detection by your forces during the war. Now, we are simply survivors.'

**'What do you want?'** 'Merely to live somewhere free of oppression.\* Our current quarters are uncomfortable at best, and our people have no future there.'

**'What was Lac'Zon's mission?'** 'He was sent to find out if there were any other like us still alive and we felt your station Babylon 5 was the best place to begin our search. Since he has found no one, we must conclude we're alone.'

## Jal'Maris

4<sup>th</sup> Level Dilgar Officer/4<sup>th</sup> Level Agent

**Hit Points:** 26

**Initiative:** +4 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 20 ft.

**DV:** 17 (+7 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +9/+4 melee or +9/+4 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Low-Light Vision, Branch Specialisation (Fleet), Rallying Call, Security Systems, Sneak Attack +1d6

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 11

**Skills:** Bluff +8, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +7, Listen +12, Pilot +14, Sense Motive +13, Spot +8

**Feats:** Alertness, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Resist Scan, Toughness

**Equipment:** Flak jacket, PPG rifle (Dilgar equivalent), suicide bomb, communications headset

Jal'Maris is one of Lac'Zon's closest friends and has been greatly worried about his safety during the mission. With his friend now safe, he concerns himself first with security and then with a cautious retreat to the hidden base. He has no intention of revealing to the players anything more than he must. He also gives the players only what he thinks they want to hear—that the Dilgar are just poor, pitiful survivors who wish only to be left alone in peace. That is true for some of them, of course, but not all.

Jal'Maris has a suicide bomb strapped to his waist. If he dies or willingly triggers this weapon, it explodes for 8d6 blast damage to everyone within 30 feet, Reflex save (DC 17) for half. All his compatriots willingly fail their saves, virtually ensuring their deaths. Should the players threaten Jal'Maris and the others, he reveals the presence of the

bomb and threatens to set it off if they do not back away at once.

## Fol'Tan, Ti'Shal and Re'Thas

8<sup>th</sup> Level Dilgar Scientists

**Hit Points:** 16

**Initiative:** +1 (+1 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 13 (+3 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +3 melee or +5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Low-Light Vision, Primary Area of Study (Medical/Knowledge (genetics)/Technical (electronics)), Use Alien Artefact, Peripheral Studies (Knowledge (alien life)/Medical/Technical (space travel))

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 8, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 12

**Skills:** Computer Use +15, Concentration +12, Knowledge (alien language) +15, Knowledge (alien life) +15, Knowledge (genetics) +15, Knowledge (military) +15, Knowledge (star systems) +15, Listen +13, Medical +13, Profession (doctor) +13, Spot +13, Technical (space travel) +15

**Feats:** Alertness, Alien Anatomy, Great Fortitude, Resist Scan, Toughness

**Equipment:** Scanning tools, medical tools, PPG Mark 10 (Dilgar equivalent)

These doctors are here to ensure Lac'Zon is free of bugs and sensors and has survived his ordeal without any life-threatening injuries or alien diseases. Once he is cleared they intend to return to the shuttle at once.

**‘Why did you choose now to do this, and not some other time?’** ‘We heard about Jha’Dur. Until she surfaced, we were certain we were the only ones left. Her appearance gave us hope.’

**‘Do you have any anger towards us for the war?’** ‘No.\* Our military did what they felt they had to do. They failed, and our star has fallen. We have come to accept this. All we want now is a chance to live in peace and maybe someday make amends for our failings.’\*

**‘What will you do now?’** ‘Return to our base and discuss Lac’Zon’s findings. Until we do, we don’t know. We may appeal to your leaders for sanctuary, or we may simply remain in hiding. The galaxy may not yet be ready for us to emerge.’

**Alison Fernandez:** At some point Alison will introduce herself and say this: ‘I’m here representing Theresa Cross, a woman who sympathises with your plight. She would very much like to talk to you about helping to provide further options to you. Here is a data crystal explaining the situation and how you can reach her in the future.’ She hands over the crystal and is greeted with a smile by Jal’Maris: ‘Thank you. I’ll be certain to discuss this matter with my people once we return.’

**Other:** The players can ask any other questions they can think of. Jal’Maris answers in a kind, friendly voice but does not hesitate to duck or dodge anything that asks for too many details. He will not reveal the location of his base, nor will he elaborate on anything if he is caught hiding the truth or telling a partial truth. If any telepaths attempt to probe his mind, he resists, and further attempts result in a battle. Should the players seem likely to win, he sets off his suicide bomb. He will also show the bomb if he feels the players can be talked out of fighting with the threat of its detonation.

Eventually the time for talk nears its end. The scientists discover and extract the bug from Lac’Zon’s gut and prepare to wake him up. This is when things start to go wrong.

## Encounter Eight: The Attack

Close by, under cover of a dust storm, a Drazi shuttle has landed. Six handpicked Drazi commandos charge across the rocky landscape and rush towards the makeshift shack. Read the following:

*Lac’Zon is just awakening when suddenly Jal’Maris’s communicator begins to spit out frantic words in the Dilgar language. Before you can even try to translate, your own*

### Drazi Commandos

**7<sup>th</sup> Level Drazi Soldiers (6)**

**Hit Points:** 25

**Initiative:** +5 (+3 Dex)

**Speed:** 20 ft.

**DV:** 17 (+5 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +10/+5 melee or +10/+5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Covering Fire, DR 5 (3 from armour)

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 9

**Skills:** Climb +13, Jump +13

**Feats:** Dense Scales, Great Fortitude, Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Focus (Drazi assault rifle), Weapon Focus (hunter’s blade), Weapon Specialisation (hunter’s blade)

**Equipment:** Drazi assault rifle, Drazi heavy combat armour, hunter’s blade, concussion grenade, communications headset

These Drazi are here to capture Lac’Zon and any other Dilgar they find. They are ruthless in their methods and will kill anyone who resists. They will not retreat, but fight to the death.

**Drazi Assault Rifle:** This weapon is similar to a PPG rifle, but is heavier and includes a laser sight. Stats are identical to a standard PPG rifle except as follows: Cost 1,200 credits, critical 18-20, ammo 20, weight 10 lb. Generally these weapons are only available in Drazi space.

**Drazi Heavy Combat Armour:** These extremely bulky metal/ceramic composite suits are primarily designed to defend their wearers against energy attack. They have these statistics: Cost 3,000 credits, weight 40 lb., DR 3 (5 vs. energy), +2 armour bonus to DV, speed reduced by 10 feet, –2 penalty to Dexterity while worn. A non-Drazi suffers double the listed penalties.

*comm squawks loudly. It is Caitlin, aboard the Liberty’s Fortune! ‘Heads up over there! I’m picking up a bunch of heat signatures coming your way fast. Get back here! Now!’*

At this point the players should roll initiative. Set up the map with everyone inside the shack, the Dilgar shuttle about 80 feet away to the left and the *Liberty’s Fortune* 100 feet to the right. The Drazi begin the encounter 120 feet to the south, charging towards the shack in an inverted V formation. Three break to the left, drop behind rocks and cut off escape



## Dilgar Ochlavita Destroyer

One of the more common Dilgar ships, this heavy combat vessel is designed to be fast and manoeuvrable while sporting a decent amount of firepower. It carries no fighters, however, and has few comforts for the Dilgar crewman. There are several different well-known variants, so that there is an Ochlavita for virtually every type of mission imaginable. The one in this scenario is a leader version, referred to as the 'D' variant during the Dilgar War.

This particular Ochlavita is very old—it is a relic of the Dilgar War kept in operating condition on the hidden Dilgar base. Anyone making a Technical (space travel) check while scanning the ship identifies it as an Ochlavita on a DC 17 result and an Ochlavita-D on a DC 20, and notices its extreme age on a DC 22.

### Statistics:

Colossal II Spacecraft; hp 375; DV 11 (-10 size, +11 agility); DR 16; Spd -; Acc 5; Dec 3; Han +3; Sensor +3; Stealth 5; Cargo 25,000 lb.; 5 Officers, 4 Pilots, 5 Sensor Operators, 32 Crewmen

### D Model Weapons:

As a leader variant, this ship gains +1 on its initiative check in combat.

One Bomb Rack; Boresight; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 20 (when used in missile configuration); Critical 20; Range 10; Ammunition 8; No Reloads

Two Quad Pulsars; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 14+2d10; Critical 20; Range 5; Rapid Fire (4 shots per round)

Two Laser Cannons; Boresight; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 20+3d10; Critical 19-20; Range 5

Two Medium Bolters; 2 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 35; Critical 20; Range 4

Four Scatter-Pulsars; 1 Front Left, 1 Front Right, 1 Left Rear, 1 Right Rear; Attack +1 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 2; Rapid Fire

### Craft:

2 Shuttles

to the Dilgar shuttle. The other three do the same in the other direction, blocking movement to the *Liberty*.

At this point, how the battle plays out is up to the players. The Dilgar refuse to move to the *Liberty* and insist on going to their own shuttle. They also do not want the players on

their shuttle either, although if the Drazis prove too difficult to dislodge, they will agree if they must.

Anyone taking cover behind rocks receives a +4 cover bonus. The Games Master should set up a random assortment of rocks on the map to provide plenty of tactical options for this fight. Dust being blown about outside also provides a +1 DV bonus for every 15 full feet between a ranged attacker and his target.

As long as the players remain in the prefabricated shack they are treated as having three-fourths cover (+7 DV). The shack also provides a +3 natural armour bonus to DR against any incoming fire, which penetrates the thin plastic walls fairly easily. The players may realise that they can cut their way out the back of the structure, fleeing into the dust. If they do this they can sweep back around to their ships. The Drazis, seeing this, are forced to spread out to cover more territory. This allows the players to either pick them off piecemeal or face no more than one or two of them before retreating to their ships.

Possible results of this tough fight are as follows.

**If the players are victorious:** The Dilgar collect their dead, thank the players and head for their shuttle. They do not allow the players to join them unless they have no choice—which would basically happen only if threatened by superior firepower. The Dilgar vessel then lifts off and departs.

**If the players escape to the *Liberty's Fortune*:** The Dilgar fight a running battle back to their shuttle. If he must, Jal'Maris uses his bomb to slow the pursuers down so Lac'Zon and the scientists can get away. As soon as every Dilgar who can escape gets to the shuttle, it takes off and flees. The Drazis then run back into the windstorm, back to their own craft.

**If the players flee onto the Dilgar shuttle:** Though reluctant to allow this, the Dilgar will permit this option if they must. As soon as everyone who can possibly be rescued is aboard, the shuttle lifts off. The Drazis take any Dilgar prisoners or bodies as they head back to their own ship, leaving any unconscious or dead players behind. Once the Drazis are gone, Caitlin will emerge and treat any wounded players as best she can using a medkit from the *Liberty*. After that she takes the survivors aboard and takes off.

**If the players are defeated:** The Dilgar fight to the bitter end, but the Drazis only kill those who resist. If the players surrender, the Drazis take their weapons and imprison them inside the shack until the battle is over. Jal'Maris uses his suicide bomb in a way that will kill as many Drazis as possible—which may theoretically turn the tide of battle. If

the Dilgar still lose, the shuttle pilot takes off, abandoning his fellows and fleeing into the dusty sky. The Drazi take any Dilgar prisoners or bodies and retreat to their own ship, leaving the players behind.

As soon as the shuttles start taking off, proceed to the final encounter.

## Encounter Nine: Three-Way Battle

By the time the *Liberty's Fortune* reaches orbit there are three ships on her sensors. These are the EarthForce Hyperion *Demeter*, the Dilgar Ochlavita Destroyer *Feeder of the Flame* and the Drazi Sunhawk *Tol'kani*. The Hyperion is inbound from the jump gate, the Drazi is in the shadow of a nearby moon and the Ochlavita is running silent in geosynchronous orbit far above the meeting place. The Dilgar shuttle makes for their ship, while the Drazi one sends a message summoning the Sunhawk. Meanwhile Caitlin receives a message from the *Demeter* broadcast to all ships—stand down and prepare to be boarded.

As soon as the shuttle docks, the Ochlavita hightails it towards the jump gate. The Sunhawk recovers its own shuttle and follows, slowly gaining. Meanwhile the Hyperion takes up a position to intercept both ships and repeats its order to stand down. Naturally neither of them do so.

Caitlin contacts the captain of the *Demeter*, Commander Reyna Martinez, and is told to land aboard the ship. She ignores any other communications, as she is too busy preparing her ship for what appears to be an inevitable fight. The *Liberty* can reach the *Demeter* before either of the opposing vessels because she is not held up waiting to recover shuttlecraft. Caitlin lands, glad to be aboard what she sees as a safe haven.

Once aboard, the players find themselves on an Earth Alliance warship at red alert. They can help out if they wish, depending upon their personal skills. The ship is likely to take damage during the fight, so some may become part of the damage control crews. Others can help at gunnery stations or on the bridge.

The ship has no Starfuries available for combat because the usual flight of six have all been damaged or destroyed during recent battles with raiders. Captain Martinez will not send any of her own pilots out in damaged fighters, but a player might try flying the one flight-capable (but severely patched-up) Starfury if he can make a Diplomacy or Intimidate check (DC 16). The Starfury has the following damage: -10 hit points, -2 acceleration and deceleration, -1 handling, -1

sensors, -2 penalty to all Pilot checks. Furthermore, it can only employ its afterburners once during the scenario.

Captain Martinez has orders to follow Lac'Zon and protect the *Liberty*, so she is not sure what to do as the two opposing spacecraft barrel towards her. Unless the players intervene, she will not fire unless fired upon. Unfortunately the Drazi and Dilgar both see the Hyperion as a threat. The Sunhawk and Ochlavita start exchanging fire as they approach the *Demeter* and then, as they pass on either side of her, open up on the Hyperion. Instantly a three-way battle is under way.

If the players rush to the bridge and intervene, they may be able to convince Martinez to change her actions. To do so they must make a Diplomacy check (DC 21) or Bluff check (DC 25). Attempting an Intimidate check or failing a Bluff check causes her to throw the players off the bridge and the battle goes as described above. If they succeed she will act on their suggestions, which could be just about anything. They might ask her to attack the Drazi only, or to withdraw, or to contact the Ochlavita and arrange to team up on the Drazi.

The Drazi ship will not retreat or withdraw until the Dilgar ship is destroyed—they refuse to back down in the face of these hated enemies of their people. Should the humans not fight the Dilgar, they are obviously collaborators and are to be destroyed. Unless the players intervene, Martinez realises that politically her only option is to fight both ships. If she does not attack the Dilgar she *will* look like a collaborator, and if she does not fight the Drazi she is a sitting duck to a potential sneak attack by the Ochlavita.

Note: If some or all of the players are aboard the *Feeder of the Flame* instead of the *Demeter*, Commander Martinez is still forced to fight a three-way battle. The Dilgar ship does not stop for fear of the Drazi, and the Drazi fight to the death for the glory of destroying their hated enemies. However, Martinez does take care not to blow up the Ochlavita as long as the players are aboard. Meanwhile the players on that ship can assist as best they can, firing guns or working damage control. If things go poorly for the Dilgar ship they will be evacuated by shuttle, but none of the Dilgar retreat in this way. They too fight to the bitter end.

## Aftermath

How this all works out depends entirely upon the outcome of the space battle.

**If the Dilgar ship survives and the Drazi are destroyed,** the Dilgar cease fire at once and make a beeline for the jump gate. They refuse to stop no matter what, even if it means their destruction. Captain Martinez stops firing only if the



players ask her to do so or if there are players on board the Dilgar ship. If there are any players aboard, they are put in a shuttle and released just before the *Feeder of the Flame* escapes into hyperspace.

**If the Dilgar ship is destroyed,** the Drazi break off the battle at once and head for the jump gate. Commander Martinez demands that they stop and answer for their crime of shooting at an Earth Alliance ship. The Drazi reply that unless the *Demeter* ceases fire at once, they will be reported as Dilgar collaborators. Fernandez stops shooting and the Drazi captain says his government will issue a formal thank-you for her 'support' in eradicating the Dilgar threat.

**If the Hyperion is destroyed (unlikely),** the players will have to flee on board the *Liberty's Fortune*, presumably with as many crewmen as they can rescue. As soon as the Hyperion is defeated, the other two ships concentrate on each other and make no attempt to finish her off or collect escape pods. The victor limps to the jump gate and disappears, leaving the *Liberty* to fend for itself.

If the players are aboard the Hyperion when the fight ends, Commander Martinez interviews the players and gets their statements about what happened and why the beacon on Lac'Zon is no longer available. No matter what they say, she dutifully takes down their report and then takes them back to Babylon 5. Should the *Demeter* have severe damage, she reluctantly releases the *Liberty's Fortune* to make its own way back to the station, while the Hyperion moves towards the nearest repair facility.

Once back on Babylon 5, Captain Sheridan interviews the players and considers their words carefully. More than likely, his conclusion will be that the Dilgar are no threat, although the fact that they had a warship—even if just a destroyer—is somewhat worrisome. If the players brought back a scan, or report that it was obviously an aging relic, this eases his concerns somewhat. Regardless, he files a report with EarthForce, pays the players their money and considers the matter closed.

Meanwhile Theresa Cross also thanks the players for their help and takes Alison's report with a grain of salt. She then settles back to wait to see if the Dilgar ever contact her on the special channel she has set up for that purpose. Whether or not they do—and what happens as a result—is for the future.

### Other Possible Post-Module Events

**Next Step for the Dilgar:** Exactly how the remaining Dilgar survivors act from this point on depends on how the players conducted themselves during the module and what happened in the final battle. If the players were always professional and convinced Fernandez to help defeat the Drazi in the space

battle, the Dilgar will be more trusting and will open up a secret dialogue with Theresa Cross later on. Otherwise they are likely to simply stay in hiding, feeling that perhaps the galaxy is not yet ready for their re-emergence. The Games Master may choose to have them pop up again later in the campaign—as either allies or foes of the players.

As a result of this scenario, it is also possible that Lac'Zon, or possibly another Dilgar, could reappear later. A Games Master may even allow a Dilgar player if circumstances permit. In this case use the statistics for the Dilgar found on p.208 of the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game*. Some additional Dilgar-related feats are available in Appendix C of this book.

**The Dilgar Plan or Lack Thereof:** Note also that this module deliberately does not define the Dilgar's ultimate plan, nor does it specify the location of their outpost. It is suggested in the introductory text that the Dilgar were looking for more of their own, but they may have had an ulterior motive. Did they want to make amends for their atrocities during the Dilgar War? Or do they really just want to find a garden spot on an isolated planet somewhere so they can live in peace? On the other side of the coin, do they want to find a way to secretly continue the Dilgar War as guerrilla fighters? Perhaps, in the years they have spent in isolation, they have developed a new and destructive bioweapon that can wipe out all life wherever it appears—thereby continuing Jha'Dur's legacy and creating a new 'monument' to the Dilgar race. Any of these possibilities could lead to future scenarios.

**What About the Outpost?** And where exactly is their hidden outpost? The precise location is not important for purposes of this module but could make an excellent seed for further investigation. The strange radiation signature in Lac'Zon's body could be a clue that leads the players to the site if the Games Master wants to provide further scenarios along this track.

### Suggested Experience for This Module

Returning to Theresa Cross with the news: 1,000

Lac'Zon survives the fight with the Drazi commandos: 200

Jal'Maris survives: 200

Each Dilgar scientist who escapes to the shuttle: 100

The Dilgar Ochlavita escapes the final battle: 200

# Module Four: New Allies

[The Rangers'] job for now is to patrol the frontier, to listen, to watch and to return with reports too sensitive to trust to regular channels. They are my eyes and ears. Where you see them, you see me.

—Jeffrey Sinclair, 'The Coming of Shadows'

*So. It is all true. My worst fears, realised...*

*The corruption goes far deeper than I ever dreamed. This is more than just an assassination of our President. More than just profit-mongering by the company I once adored with all my heart and soul. This goes even deeper than the acquisition of weapons for EarthForce, a deception I once accepted as necessary. Much deeper.*

*The ancient technology we've been studying isn't so ancient after all. The ones who built it aren't long dead as we surmised. They're back, and growing in strength. A war is coming...if it isn't already here. And President Clark is turning the Earth Alliance into their puppets.*

*This isn't a personal crusade any longer. This is war. I must have allies now, more than ever. More than that, I need resources. I can't afford to throw anything away.*

*Or anyone.*

## Background

### Module Summary

- ⑤ Theresa Cross asks the players to help a Narn rescue his 'family' on a planet in Quadrant 14.
- ⑤ An assassin tries to kill Theresa.
- ⑤ The players journey to Sigma 957 and transfer to a captured Centauri patrol ship.
- ⑤ The players travel to Quadrant 14, elude a battle in progress and land on S'hanthus.
- ⑤ The group moves through some caves, fighting native creatures, to find the Ranger base.

- ⑤ The players must defeat creatures of Shadow to free the Rangers from the base.
- ⑤ The players are (most likely) captured by Centauri after leaving the planet.
- ⑤ The players escape when the Centauri ship is attacked.
- ⑤ The players face a final showdown with Centauri guards and another Shadow creature in the doomed Centauri ship's shuttle bay.

### Names and Places of Interest

- ⑤ G'Trokk: Narn who needs help rescuing his 'family' (actually a Ranger training encampment)
- ⑤ Quadrant 14: Narn system attacked by the Centauri in the spark that set off the war
- ⑤ R'Shon: Narn assassin who tries to kill Theresa Cross
- ⑤ S'hanthus: Fourth planet of Quadrant 14 where a Ranger training base is hidden
- ⑤ *Nemesis*: Centauri Haven provided by Theresa Cross for this mission
- ⑤ Tareen Feraz: Centauri agent who helps the *Nemesis* get into Centauri-occupied space
- ⑤ Admiral Priya: Centauri commander of the garrison in Quadrant 14
- ⑤ Tunnel worm: Creature native to S'hanthus that attacks by burrowing through walls
- ⑤ Tobias: Ranger inductee the players meet early in their explorations
- ⑤ Dark Hunter: Creature of Shadow that attacks the players and Rangers on S'hanthus
- ⑤ Armoured rat: Vermin native to S'hanthus that attacks from hiding
- ⑤ Tinthatil: Ranger in charge of the S'hanthus base
- ⑤ Lieutenant Nevla: Cowardly Centauri officer put in charge of the captured *Nemesis*

While the eyes of the galaxy have been on the Narn-Centauri War, Theresa Cross has been busy. She has met with all manner of potential allies in her quest to discover the truth behind what is going on within the Earth Alliance. In the process she has learned a number of disturbing things—things that quite frankly leave her numb with fear.

Behind the cover of making the Earth Alliance 'safe for humanity again', President Clark has gone too far. He has secretly allied Earth with an ancient, destructive alien force that will soon throw the galaxy into chaos. Clark is on his way to becoming a new Hitler. Under cover of racism and 'Humans First', he plans nothing less than the conquest of the galaxy—and this will doom the Earth as surely as it doomed the Dilgar and all those other would-be conquering races that came before.



Worse, the mysterious aliens—whose technology Theresa has been so helpful in locating—are behind Clark all the way. She knows these ‘Shadows’ must have an agenda that extends beyond helping Clark take power. Surely a race so advanced and powerful would not concern themselves with a tin-plated would-be dictator when other, more powerful empires are available to act as pawns. So what are their true goals? Theresa does not know. She wants very much to know, however. That is why she is so active in seeking allies and informants.

Now her network is bearing fruit. Entirely on her own, she has learned about a clandestine group known as the ‘Rangers’. Mostly made up of humans working alongside Minbari and a few other races, these people share Theresa’s goals almost one hundred percent. They both intend to stand as beacons of light against the dangerous Shadows. All that remains is for Theresa to make contact with them. Yet this is more difficult than it appears. The Rangers will not even consider talking to a former IPX agent no matter how good her cover story is—or how many people seem to be trying to kill her. This leaves Theresa only one possible way to reach the Rangers and prove herself worthy of their trust.

Once again she must call upon the players...

### **Suggested Level for This Module: 4-6 4<sup>th</sup> level characters**

## **Before the Module**

As usual, several links to other scenarios are available. Note that Alison Fernandez, Caitlin Schulz and the *Liberty’s Fortune* do not leave the station after the end of the previous module. If asked they explain that the ongoing Narn-Centauri War makes travel difficult, so they are basically on permanent station here should Theresa need the players for anything on a moment’s notice. The players will have access to the *Liberty* for the beginning of this module and all intervening scenarios.

### **Link to ‘All Alone in the Night’**

During this episode aliens known as the Streib kidnap Captain Sheridan and a number of other pilots from throughout civilised space. The intervention of the Omega Destroyer *Agamemnon* and several other vessels destroys the Streib ship and ends the threat. Or does it?

Some members of the Earth Alliance are not so sure. The Streib homeworld has been located and their raiding ship dealt with, but who is to say they will not try again? What if they are taking what they have learned and mobilising for war? A small team is needed to return to the Streib planet and set up an automated listening post in the system. Special

Forces would do this themselves, but EarthForce does not have a team close enough and besides, if they are caught this could spark a war. Intelligence believes that the Streib will not protest the recent justified action against them, but further missions into their space could fan a fire that right now is just an ember.

This mission is more appropriate for players who have an individual with a military background of some sort among their number. If the group is all civilian they probably will not get this assignment unless they have proven themselves capable of stealthy operations in the past.

The scenario begins as Colonel Wilhelm Schmidt, an Army officer, approaches the group in their usual haunts. He explains that he has a job for them if they are interested. The pay is 250 credits each plus expenses as well as the gratitude of the Earth Alliance. If the players at least agree to listen to his mission, he explains that all he needs is for certain equipment to be placed on a certain moon in a certain system, the name of which will be given to them after the mission begins. No combat is required and the moon is known to be uninhabited and airless. The only caveat is that if the players get in trouble or are captured, the military will not acknowledge them or send a rescue party.

Schmidt also offers the players the use of a corporate escort (see p.148 of *The Earth Alliance Fact Book*) if they do not have their own ship. However, he will not provide any crew. Since the corporate escort is fast and armed, the players are advised to accept this kind offer. Alison and Caitlin will agree to come along, if only out of curiosity—or so they claim. Actually Theresa Cross has asked them both to keep close to the group at all times, so they have little choice but to come along.

Naturally the players are not required to undertake this mission and if they do not, Alison and Caitlin are off the hook. Colonel Schmidt will just find someone else willing to take on the challenge, expressing his disappointment. The players will never learn if he finds another group or if they are indeed successful. If the players do agree, however, they are directed to the docking bay where the corporate escort *Liarbane* awaits.

Launch occurs normally under Caitlin’s careful control. However, once the ship enters hyperspace Caitlin discovers that the ship’s navigational systems have taken on a life of their own and are flying the vessel on autopilot (if they are using the *Liberty’s Fortune* this does not happen, so modify the box text appropriately). A pre-recorded message then plays, explaining their mission.

*The image of Colonel Schmidt appears, dressed in the same uniform you saw earlier. He begins to speak. ‘Sorry*

to keep this all a secret, but you know how things are with us military types.' He laughs. 'You'll be going to Streib space. You probably remember them—they were all over the media recently. They like to kidnap people and do medical experiments, so keep away from them at all costs. You'll be dropping out of hyperspace at a small temporary jump gate we left behind well outside the Streib system. We want you to unload the listening post in the cargo bay and set it up on the fifth moon of the gas giant marked in your nav computer. The whole thing's totally automated, but you need to set it up yourself. All the instructions are in the cargo bay—just make sure you put the equipment on the right side of the moon, or it won't be of any use to us. Oh, when you're ready to come back, just head back to the jump gate. Once you're in hyperspace, the ship flies back here on its own. I wouldn't try to steal it, if I were you. Not that such fine, upstanding citizens as yourself would ever do such a thing. See you when you get back!'

After this announcement the screen goes blank. Caitlin checks it and discovers that the message has been erased. She then does some further verification and announces that she cannot alter the ship's course. You are on your way and there is nothing you can do about it.

The trip to the Streib system takes two days. It is actually surprisingly close to Babylon 5, considering how dangerous and unknown this alien race is. The system lies far off any established jump routes. Were it not for the presence of the temporary jump gate left behind by the EA following the destruction of the raiding ship, Caitlin cannot be sure she would ever be able to find it. This is a sobering thought—if the gate were to be discovered and destroyed prior to the end of the trip, the players would be lost forever in hyperspace.

Fortunately nothing of the sort happens. The ship arrives in the vicinity of the Streib system without incident and there are no patrol ships hanging about. In fact there are no ships at all on the *Liarbane's* sensors. The way seems clear to the gas giant, but let the players take charge here. They know nothing at all about the Streib system or where they are going. Fortunately a Technical (space travel) check (DC 16) will discover a database within the ship's computer that describes what is known about the system. See the sidebar.

Eventually—if the players proceed with the mission—they will take their ship towards the gas giant with Caitlin at the helm. Presumably they will approach by swinging wide around the outskirts of the system and approaching from the Oort cloud (the area where comets are born). They may even think to close while on silent running. As they move in they activate a number of magnetic mines that Caitlin immediately detects. The mines seem to have their own thrusters, as they angle towards the ship of their own accord. Should they hit, they attach with a clang that reverberates throughout the

## The Streib System

The actual name for this system is not known; the official term is 'the Streib system' while the sun has the rather inauspicious moniker of 'Star M-16533-AR'. The Minbari know a route to this system, but until they shared this information with the Earth Alliance they kept it to themselves, because they considered the Streib an isolated and dangerous race that needed to be kept apart from the rest of the civilised galaxy.

Star M-16533-AR is a blue-white dwarf with six planets and the usual array of scattered asteroids, comets and other inter-system debris. The second planet, which is about 50% water, is home to the Streib race. It is located on the extreme edge of the system's life belt and is covered with clouds, so sunlight is a rare sight on the surface. In addition to the home planet the system has two airless rocks and three small gas giants. The last of these has eight moons, the fifth of which is the choice for the automated listening post in the *Liarbane's* cargo bay. Presently the sixth planet is nearing perihelion (the closest approach to the sun) and is also in almost direct conjunction with the Streib homeworld. Thus it is actually nearer to the Streib than any other planets in the system except the first—which is much too risky to approach.

## Streib Magnetic Mines

These are captor mines with 10 hit points, DR 5, stealth 15, speed 3 and fuel 5. They are arranged in a spread as the Games Master wishes, in such a way that at least several will be encountered as the players approach the planet. The players can elude them by accelerating through the field or by going slowly in a straight line while blasting away at any that approach. However, even if one hits it does not explode. These are very old mines, so their triggers do not go off immediately upon impact.

Once attached, a magnetic mine can only be removed with an EVA. This requires a spacewalk and a Technical (mechanical) check (DC 20). The mine can then be removed and discarded. If the players wish to keep a mine for examination and/or sale, this requires a Technical (mechanical) check (DC 27). Failure activates the mine, which will explode in two rounds, scoring 10d6 blast damage to anything within 50 feet. The player will instantly be aware of the mine's activation and has one more chance to deactivate it. After that he will have to fling it into space or otherwise get rid of it before it goes off. If the explosion occurs aboard ship, this could be disastrous!

Should a mine attach and the players leave it on board, it explodes if the ship attempts to land or if they go into hyperspace. After this the players should be more than motivated to go extravehicular to try removing any others that are on the hull!



entire length of the hull. Fortunately the mines are ancient and do not go off immediately, but they could blow up at any time—or so Caitlin warns.

After the players deal with the mines, they then have to get to the moon. As they approach, Caitlin detects an energy signature on the surface and slows the ship before entering orbit. Sure enough, a ground-based turret starts firing a moment later, but it is out of range. The turret has range 5, damage 10+2d10, critical 20, attack +2, DR 10 and hit points 20. It also has only a 180-degree field of fire, so if the *Liarbane* flies to the other side of the moon it can land without any further incident.

The problem is that according to Colonel Schmidt's pre-recorded instructions, the automated listening post must be placed on the same side of the moon as the turret. The obvious worry is that whoever is manning the turret will spot the equipment. Therefore Alison recommends the players mount a mission to destroy the structure.

How the players proceed is up to them:

**Direct Assault:** They can, of course, attack the turret directly (from orbit), giving it a couple of pot-shots before they get close enough to use the ship's weapons. Unless they have taken a lot of damage from mines, they have enough firepower on the corporate escort to take care of the turret fairly easily. If they are hurt or did not bring the *Liarbane*, this option is right out.

**Walking to the Turret:** If the players avoid the turret and land on the other side of the moon, they can move to within a half-mile of the outpost by hugging the ground. Caitlin eventually lands, afraid to get too close without getting blasted. The players can then walk across the moon's rocky, airless surface using the ship's pressure suits for protection. Note that the moon has very low gravity, although this is not likely to come into play as there are no encounters on the surface. The turret, which is automated, can be destroyed with demolitions charges or deactivated with a Technical (engineering) check (DC 28). If the players are not able to do either of these things they can spike the guns with rocks or any other handy materials. When the ship flies away later, the turret blows itself up trying to shoot at them.

**Ignoring the Turret:** If the players want to be sneaky they can just set up the listening post without bothering with the turret. If they get within 100 yards, a Knowledge (structural engineering) check (DC 17) allows a player to recognise that this can only be an automated facility. Not only that, it is very old—it may have been here for decades. With this knowledge the players can rightly conclude that there is no reason to even worry about the turret. They can set up the listening post right under its guns if they wish.

Once the turret is dealt with the players can unload the ship and set up the listening post. Doing so is not as easy as Colonel Schmidt suggested—it requires a Technical (engineering) check (DC 28). However, the players can take 20 on this check as nothing is threatening them at present.

Once back in space the ship can leave the system without incident. If the players took the time to note their cleared passage through the minefield, they can get back that way without trouble. Otherwise they may have more run-ins with mines, but even these do not attract the attention of the Streib.

Just as the players are getting ready to leave the system, though, Caitlin reports she is picking something up on her long-range scanners. As the players watch the scope, read this:

*As you watch, dozens of very large blips appear in the vicinity of the Streib homeworld. They form into a huge armada, appearing as if out of nowhere. No, not nowhere. You soon realise they are rising off the surface of the planet, collecting near a single blip that is much larger than the others. Then, after about ten seconds, a jump point begins to form. The huge fleet begins to make the transition into hyperspace until only the huge battleship-sized spot remains. Then it too slides into the vortex and disappears.*

They players would be wise to hang out for an hour or so to make sure they do not bump into that mighty host while they are in hyperspace, but it does not matter. The Streib fleet has departed for Z'ha'dum, although the players will have no way of knowing that.

After the players get back they receive their pay from Colonel Schmidt, who tells them their mission will have to remain a secret for now. If the players also bring back some intact mines, Schmidt pays them 500 credits for them, saying they are obviously old but could still provide some useful insights on Streib technology. He will give a similar bounty if the players collected a significant amount of the Streib ground turret. The players can sell these items for twice this value on the black market if they so wish.

Suggested experience for this scenario: 300

### Link to 'Acts of Sacrifice'

In this episode a Lumati delegation arrives on Babylon 5 to set up diplomatic contact between their people and the Earth Alliance. Susan Ivanova is given the task of making the arrangements, only to discover the Lumati have an... ummm...*unique* requirement before agreeing to any treaty. She escapes without any real difficulty, but will the players be as lucky?



This side scenario should be played mostly for laughs. Alison Fernandez asks the players to meet with the Lumati on behalf of Theresa Cross—at this point she is still putting out feelers trying to acquire new allies and learn everything she can about what IPX has really been up to. In particular she wants to know what deal the Lumati made with the Earth Alliance and whether or not the Lumati have ever had any dealings with humans in the past.

To do this the players must prove to the Lumati that they are worthy of consideration. After talking with Ivanova the Lumati delegates decide that the Earth Alliance in general has ‘moral standards’ that are acceptable. However, that does not mean every group of humans is worthy. Therefore the Lumati ambassador, Correlilmurzon (speaking through his aide, who acts as a translator) insists that before he will speak to any other representatives of humanity, the players will have to prove themselves. No matter what accomplishments the players point to, they will be unable to convince him without taking action—Correlilmurzon is not interested in the past, only the present.

This scenario is highly improvisational. The players will have to come up with their own challenge and then meet it. The ‘mission’—or whatever else they come up with—can be simple or complex, but must adequately impress the Lumati ambassador. When adjudicating the results the Games Master should keep in mind that the Lumati are aliens and do not think as humans do. For example, in ‘Acts of Sacrifice’, Correlilmurzon was impressed by Downbelow because it showed how humans were willing to house their superior citizens apart from the lesser ones. The players could take a similar tack—a perfect solution to the problem would be to arrange some sort of contest to prove they are superior to everyone else. Let the players be as creative as they can get.

Naturally, once the Lumati are impressed they want to seal their deal the same way they did with Ivanova—with sex. This time, though, they are wise to the ‘human way’ and insist on their own methods. If none of the players want to agree—and they almost assuredly will not—Alison Fernandez grits her teeth and ‘throws herself on the grenade’. She disappears into Correlilmurzon’s quarters for about half an hour and when she comes out she goes straight to her quarters, alone. She never talks about that half hour again—ever.

She does, however, succeed in her mission, gaining the information Theresa Cross wanted while setting up a line of communication between the ex-IPX agent and the Lumati. Whether or not this will come in handy in the future is anybody’s guess.

Suggested experience for this scenario: 100 (plus 100 for any player who accedes to the Lumati ambassador’s final ‘test’)

### Link to ‘Hunter, Prey’

In this episode Dr. Everett Jacobs is on Babylon 5, hiding out from Earth Special Intelligence. He supposedly has on his person top-secret information that could ‘bring down the Earth Alliance.’ What he actually has is medical data that proves President Clark had foreknowledge of the destruction of EarthForce One. Eventually Sheridan is able to hide him from the ESI agents and recover the data crystal that contains the vital information.

If the players have reason to hear of this developing story, Alison Fernandez’s ears perk up. This is exactly the sort of thing she has been warned to watch out for. The information Jacobs possesses could be invaluable to her cause. Therefore Alison attempts to convince the players to join in the hunt for Jacobs and try to acquire the information for her employer.

During the course of the episode two human lurkers named Max and Tyrell kidnap Dr. Jacobs. Upon discovering the data crystal, Max takes it and Jacobs’s antique pocket watch. He sells the watch to a shady merchant and uses the crystal to bargain with Agent Derek Cranston of ESI. Meanwhile Garibaldi and Dr. Franklin are able to retrace Max’s steps to rescue Jacobs.

This leaves a period of about 20 minutes during which the data crystal can be examined and possibly copied. If the players have any connections in Downbelow they can potentially use them to track Jacobs down before Garibaldi does. The two lurkers have to pass through Brown Seven to get to their hidden lair, so if the players are on good relations with Frankie the Rat they can potentially use that relationship to locate Max and Tyrell. Another way is to intercept the communications between Max and Agent Cranston, determining his location by either tracing the signal or calling him themselves to make a private offer.





If the players are able to get to Max before Garibaldi or Cranston do, they can either take the crystal for themselves or just make a copy of it. If they do not want a showdown with Max they can simply pay him to copy the crystal (200 credits is his asking price). If they take the crystal they can return it to Security for a similar reward—presumably after copying it for Theresa Cross. Of course, if they do make a copy for Theresa they had better keep this information secret, as Captain Sheridan will be none too pleased if he learns of their duplicity.

If they do acquire the data for Theresa, she admits that it only includes information she already knows from previous investigations. However, this is the first time she actually has good, solid proof in her hands. With this she can surely attract new allies to her cause. She adds a bonus of 500 credits to the players' joint expense account as a bonus.

Suggested experience for this scenario: 100

### Link to 'There All the Honour Lies'

In this episode the station is forced by dwindling finances to sell Babylon 5 official merchandise in Zocalo stores and elsewhere. Although this effort is to be short-lived, some of the merchants come up with surprisingly effective ideas for making money, including such things as baseball caps, alien (and human) masks, teddy bears and of course the controversy-stirring anatomically incorrect dolls. Another seller takes all of this a step further—he arranges to sell a set of collectible *Babylon 5 Personalities* trading cards.

The cards are sold in foil packets that contain a random assortment of cards. A complete set consists of 40 individuals ranging from Lt. Keffer, Na'Toth, Vir and Lennier all the way up to the top ambassadors, including Kosh. At the top of the list is Captain Sheridan. If any of the players are significantly important, they may have cards of their own!

Immediately after the *Babylon 5 Personalities* release, the common (low-level) cards start showing up in the trash while the rare and ultra-rare top cards start commanding high prices. As word begins to filter through the station that all official B5 merchandise will soon be cancelled the cards begin to appreciate ever higher in value, with a Sheridan card selling for over 100 credits and many others going for 50 credits or more.

Soon the very last of the card packs is gone, less than two weeks after the craze begins. In some parts of Downbelow the rare cards are worth more than credit chits. There are cases of violence and even a murder attributed to the collectibles.

Naturally the players can get involved in the speculating if they so desire—and yes, this is a blatant parody of the collectible card game market! Acquiring a complete set should be incredibly difficult. Yet as the craze reaches its peak a speculator approaches the players with an offer they cannot refuse. The individual in question will be someone the players have met previously—perhaps Frankie the Rat or someone else with good money and connections. He says he has managed to get his hands on a complete set of *B5P* cards and wants to make the ultimate collectible item out of them. He wants the players to get every single card personally autographed! In return the players will receive 50% of the profits once the set is sold at auction following its completion.

Acquiring the autographs will be easy for some, difficult for others and nearly impossible for several. All of the low-level cards are easy to take care of, as long as the individuals in question are still alive—e.g. if the players wait until after 'Divided Loyalties' they lose their shot at Talia Winters, and after Season Two ends Lt. Keffer is lost as well. The players may have to jump through hoops to get some of the others, however. Here are some suggestions:

**Ambassadors Mollari and G'Kar:** Since the Centauri and Narns are now at war, these two will probably ask the players to do something against the other. G'Kar may ask the players to fasten a listening device near the Centauri ambassador's quarters, while Mollari may try to convince the group to investigate Narn 'food' shipments passing through Babylon 5. The shipments may indeed turn out to be food... or they might be weapons instead. Another option is to have the players *plant* weapons in Narn food crates so they can be discovered later by customs officials, thereby creating a diplomatic incident on the supposedly neutral station.

**Michael Garibaldi:** He only signs a card if the players are friendly to Security. If they have been a pain in Security's neck, he refuses unless they prove themselves worthy of his trust. Why should he reward those who are obviously troublemakers? Getting his signature in this case could be an entire side scenario in and of itself.

**Captain Sheridan:** Unless the players have done something for him lately, they will not be able to get his autograph for any reason. He is just too busy. If the players ask him for the autograph during the events of 'And Now For a Word', he agrees on the condition that the players escort Cynthia Torqueman around the station to make sure she does not get in any trouble. This is a particularly appropriate mission if the players were of help with the pushy Tania Lancaster between Modules Two and Three.

**Susan Ivanova:** Ivanova absolutely loathes all the commercialisation on the station, so if the players try to get her signature she is going to start screaming to get the hell away. The only way they are going to get her autograph is by doing her a really big favour. If they continue to bother her about it she eventually becomes exasperated enough to agree to sign—if the players will sweep the station to ensure that all the Susan Ivanova plush dolls are collected and destroyed. This takes several days and about 500 credits in 'kill fees' but it can be accomplished, and she eventually signs the card in frustration.

**Ambassador Kosh:** Kosh, of course, does not have a signature. If the players visit him and ask for some kind of mark he will say something appropriately cryptic such as 'We all carry our own marks within.' After that he just glides away without any further response. The players may leave that card blank, or come up with some other solution like forging a Vorlon mark on the card. A Forgery check (DC 15) succeeds in this case.

**Others:** The Games Master should feel free to introduce any number of small side scenarios to acquire other signatures.

Even a personality who appeared in only a few episodes (such as the aforementioned Lt. Keffer or someone like Na'Toth or Zack Allen) might ask for something unique in exchange for his autograph. Some might want money or even a share of the profits from the sale. Another might ask that his share be donated to a charity or for the players to directly aid that charity in some way. The possibilities are endless.

The players can also attempt to forge the autograph of any individual they cannot convince to agree to sign the card. However, they should be careful. If they claim, for example, to have Mollari's signature when they really do not, he will be quick to point out that the autograph is a forgery. Also, although the buyer may not recognise the signatures as forgeries, whoever eventually winds up with the set may be able to do so and may come looking for a refund.

The amount of money the players make off the sale depends entirely on the difficulty involved in collecting the autographs and the amount of time they take to do so. They may still be trying to gain all the signatures when the events of Module Four overtake them. However, the offer will still stand upon their return. After all, the complete set of autographed cards is going to be a unique item the likes of which no one else on the station could possibly acquire.

Suggested experience for this scenario: Varies depending on difficulty

### Link to 'Confessions and Lamentations'

In this episode the Drafa plague comes to Babylon 5, killing the entire Markab population and threatening other races that have similar blood composition. Dr. Franklin

synthesises a cure but the rest of the Markab race is virtually wiped out by the fast-moving plague. If there are any Markab players, they are in serious trouble...they will need to take regular doses of Dr. Franklin's cure or else they will perish within days.

After the Drafa plague wipes out most of the Markab people, Dr. Franklin remembers something about the spirituality of that race. Upon investigating further he discovers what he was looking for. In various places about the galaxy, the Markab have established Shadrak shrines—small bases used as spiritual centres for meditation on the beauty of the universe. Most of these shrines are located around gorgeous stellar and nebula formations and some may have escaped the Drafa plague.

Calling upon his own contacts in the Earth Alliance, Minbari Federation and other





## The Valdora Nebula

This is not a nebula in the true sense of the word, as most such formations are made of nothing but gas and dust. Valdora is in fact a star system under construction. A whirling accretion disk is in the process of forming, with one star growing in the centre and at least two other potential stars in orbit nearby. Other planet-like structures are also beginning to take shape. The Shadrak orbits one of these, passing through the dust cloud once per year and otherwise staying high enough above the ecliptic that viewers are treated to a spectacular, awe-inspiring sight. Markab from all over the galaxy make regular pilgrimages here to renew their faith, so it seems very unlikely that the plague has not stretched this far.

sympathisers, Dr. Franklin summons a hodgepodge fleet of ships to take the cure to every Shadrak shrine shown in the computer's records. If the players have helped Dr. Franklin before or are known to take on such missions, they get an invitation. Otherwise they discover an advertisement in *Universe Today* asking for ship owners willing to make a humanitarian medicine run. Those who respond will be given compensation for their time and fuel.

Since the players have access to the *Liberty's Fortune*, they may well take Dr. Franklin up on his offer. He agrees to pay 1,000 credits for the four-day round trip to the Valdora Nebula, where a Shadrak shrine orbits this majestic stellar nursery. All the players have to do is deliver a briefcase full of medicine and data crystals explaining the nature of the cure and how to make more vaccine, and ensure that the Markab on the station understand what is at stake. For all Dr.

## Shadrak Shrine

These small bases are found scattered throughout Markab space, as well as nearby neutral territories and anywhere else an awe-inspiring stellar formation can be found. The purpose of a Shadrak shrine is strictly for meditation, insight and prayer. Most are open to all religions and sects, particularly pilgrims seeking enlightenment and purity. At any given time Markab of all stations and classes can be found at a Shadrak shrine, studying their gods through the beauty of the universe that surrounds them. Even members of other races and especially True Seekers are permitted access to these stations.

Shadrak shrines are armed, but only to make them a difficult target for raiders. Pirates are known to attack such places or vessels approaching them, looking for religious artefacts or other treasures. Sometimes a high-ranking priest might be kidnapped for ransom. In troubled times, Shadrak shrines are often guarded by any number of defensive vessels, especially if someone of high rank is present at the site.

Because they are used by the faithful to study nearby interstellar phenomena, Shadrak shrines are equipped with powerful sensor arrays. In a combat situation these can be used for ELINT purposes (see *The Earth Alliance Fact Book* p.115), a fact which also makes them easier to defend.

### Statistics:

Colossal III Starbase; hp 600; DV -2 (-12 size, +0 agility); DR 16; Spd N/A; Acc N/A; Dec N/A; Han N/A; Sensor +8;

Stealth 2; SQ Immobile, Artificial Gravity (Rotating), Long-Ranged, ELINT; Cargo 200,000 lb.; 4 Officers, 12 Sensor Operators, 100 Crewmen, 500 Passengers

### Weapons:

8 Heavy Plasma Cannon; 2 Front, 2 Left, 2 Right, 2 Rear; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 35+4d10; Critical 19-20; Range 3

8 Scatterguns; 2 Front, 2 Left, 2 Right, 2 Rear; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 2d10; Critical 19-20; Range 1; Rapid Fire

4 Stun Beams; 1 Front, 1 Left, 1 Right, 1 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 1d6; Critical 20; Range 5

### Craft:

6 fighters, 2 shuttles

**Stun Beam:** The stun beam is designed to degrade enemy ships and fighters, making them unwilling to press the attack. If a stun beam hits an enemy craft the weapon creates electromagnetic disturbances that last 1d6+1 rounds. For ships, one random weapon is knocked out, sensors are reduced by one, all crew skill checks suffer a -2 penalty and all to-hit rolls are reduced by one for that period of time. For fighters, the pilot suffers a -2 penalty to all Pilot checks for the duration of the effect. On a critical hit these effects last 1d6+1 minutes instead of 1d6+1 rounds. On a critical hit against a fighter the pilot also suffers 1d6 lethal damage from electrical shocks.

Franklin knows, the Shadrak shrines may already be victims of the plague and if so the players should return at once.

After getting their instructions and the supplies in question, the players set off for the shrine, which is two days away and off the beaten jump paths. The journey is uninteresting, but upon their arrival in the Valdora system they get a surprise. A voice contacts them at once, coming from the shrine. 'Unidentified ship,' comes the warning, 'you are not wanted here. Depart immediately or we will open fire!'

If the players attempt to approach, the Shadrak fires a warning plasma shot across the *Liberty's* bow and stun beams open up against the ship. The voice on the comm continues to shout out a warning, but a player who succeeds in a Sense Motive check (DC 22) recognises desperation in the defender's voice. It sounds as though the individual on the other end of the line does not really want to shoot. If the players turn around and leave, reporting failure in their mission, a follow-up expedition discovers that the station's entire population is dead.

On the other hand, if the players land anyway the weapons fire ceases and no attempt is made to stop the *Liberty* from landing. However, as soon as the players disembark, read this:

*The hangar is open and empty. You think that perhaps a dozen shuttles or small craft like the Liberty's Fortune might once have docked here. Now there is nothing but open space between you and the inner airlock. You make your way towards it cautiously, feeling strangely exposed without any cover available. Suddenly the doors ahead swing open and you behold a horrible sight. At least a dozen Markab, obviously sick with the Drafa plague, lunge towards you bearing all manner of weapons. They look frenzied as they attack. Roll initiative...*

Obviously these will not be much of a threat to the players, but the challenge is to keep as many of them alive as possible.



## Crazed Markabs

### 1st Level Markab Workers (14)

**Hit Points:** 5

**Initiative:** +1 (+1 Dex)

**Speed:** 20 ft.

**DV:** 11 (+11 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +1 melee or +1 ranged

**Special Qualities:** None

**Saves:** Fort -1, Ref +1, Will -2

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 12, Con 4\*, Int 10, Wis 6, Cha 10 (\* = weakened by disease)

**Skills:** Climb +5, Computer Use +4, Concentration +1, Jump +5, Listen +2, Spot +2

**Feats:** Varies (none that apply to the battle)

**Equipment:** Knives, fists, broken bottles, sticks, improvised weapons of all kinds

These Markab believe they are impure and have been marked for death by their gods. They will not listen to any attempt to save them, and in fact they see the players as demons come to tempt them in their time of trial. They attack until knocked out or killed.

If the players can subdue them and apply the cure they will be able to save at least this small lot of Markab from certain death.

Elsewhere in the station a single Markab priest, Loghrem, remains alive. So far he has proven resistant to the plague but he knows his time will come. He believes he will be the very last of his kind and is ready for death. He is the one who fired the base's weapons at the approaching ship, but his doctrine of pacifism prevented him from actually trying to destroy it. The same applies when the players find him in the control room. He rushes them with a staff, swinging to subdue and hoping the invaders slay him quickly. Use the stats for the Crazed Markabs (see sidebar) except that Loghrem has Con 10 and wields a staff (1d6 bludgeoning damage, critical 20).

If the players keep Loghrem alive and cure him of the plague, they can convince him that Drafa is not a punishment but an ordinary disease. This can only be done if they succeed in a Diplomacy check (DC 20) accompanied by vivid descriptions of the death of the entire Markab race. If Loghrem accepts their word, he takes the data crystal and reads its message carefully. Then he agrees to set up this shrine as a haven for any Markab survivors who wish to try to find new enlightenment in this time of their people's greatest trial. The players can now depart, sure in the knowledge that they have at least saved a tiny fraction of the Markab population from annihilation.



Suggested experience for this scenario: 25 points for each Markab not killed in the initial attack (max 300)

## Encounter One: Assassination Attempt

Theresa Cross arrives on Babylon 5 in disguise. Even Alison and Caitlin do not know she is coming. Things start off with this bit of box text:

*As usual at the end of a long day, you are hanging around the Nova Nine chatting and talking with your friends. Even Alison is there, sharing a drink with the rest of you and laughing at your stories of the latest bureaucratic snafu in Admin. Then, as you snicker at the latest joke, an old woman shuffles up to your table, hobbling on a cane. In a withered voice she says, 'Do you mind if I buy you all a drink?'*

*Before you can all decide how to respond to that, Alison's eyes go wide. 'Oh my God!' she exclaims. 'Theresa? Is that you?'*

*Now your gaze pierces heavy makeup and skilful costuming. The old woman is in fact Theresa Cross in disguise! 'Yes, it's me,' she whispers hastily. 'Not so loud! I'm incognito for a reason, you know!'*

After a semi-tearful reunion with Alison, Theresa sits down at the table and does indeed buy a round of drinks for the group. Then she explains the reason she is here. Several Narn have come to her asking for help. They are survivors of the very first attack of the Narn-Centauri War—the Shadow strike in Quadrant 14 which set off the entire conflict. The Narn refugees have family members they believe are still hiding out in an abandoned mining station in the captured system, where they remain underground for fear of capture and execution. The refugees fear that their family members will die for lack of supplies if they are not rescued soon. Theresa has agreed to help them and wants the players to provide whatever aid they can.

Of course this is not just about a humanitarian mission. Theresa knows that the 'abandoned mining station' actually houses a secret Ranger training facility that is now trapped behind Centauri lines. She feels that by rescuing any Rangers she can find, she will earn their trust and be invited into their organisation. Naturally the players will also be perfect for the Ranger team—even if some of the group's members are a little unorthodox in their methods. However, she is afraid to tell the players the whole truth about the mission. If she is wrong about anything—the presence of the Rangers, their willingness to trust Theresa, the ability of the players to

make the rescue—she could endanger her own future with the Rangers entirely. She figures that even if she sacrifices the players and the mission is a failure, she can still come out ahead in the eyes of the Rangers, because to them, just making the attempt will show she is a worthy ally.

As usual, the players can ask any questions they like. Some possible answers follow. Items marked with a \* indicate lies or half-truths that can be detected by a contested Sense Motive check against Theresa's formidable Bluff skill (+17).

**'Who are these Narn we're rescuing?'** 'None of them have any real rank of which to speak, but some are members of G'Trokk's family. He knows there were efforts being made in Quadrant 14 to establish an underground colony on the fourth planet in the system, and his family was one of the first settlers. There may be as many as a hundred Narns there. You'll be able to talk to G'Trokk later—he'll be going with you on the mission—so you can wait for his briefing.'

**'Who is this G'Trokk?'** 'He's a Narn official of not much influence, I'm afraid, but he does happen to be wealthy,\* and he's also just the sort of ally I need in the Narns. I have... my own reasons for wanting to enlist the Narns, but I'm not going to trouble all of you with that right now. Suffice to say that if the Narns win the war, I expect G'Trokk to move up in the hierarchy and I'm going to need all the help I can get considering what's coming.'

**'What do you mean? What's coming?'** 'Nothing.\* Never mind.' She is obviously concerned about something here. A Sense Motive check reveals she is much more upset than she lets on.

**'Why do we have to do this? Why not the Narn?'** 'The Narns have tried several times to retake Quadrant 14, but they can't. There's not much there, anyway—just a ruined colony the Centauri have picked clean by now. The Centauri seem to be building a base of some kind, but the Narns keep going in and destroying it before it's finished. I don't think either of them know about the underground colony.'

**'Why don't the Narn know about it?'** 'Because it was local to Quadrant 14 and nobody else from that colony survived to send in a report. Besides, maybe the Narns do know. If they do though, they can't afford the time it'll take to undertake a rescue mission. The Centauri will be on them like flies on dung.'

**'So how the hell are we supposed to get in?'** Theresa smiles. 'Because I have a secret weapon. I have a ship. You'll see what I mean later. G'Trokk will brief you once you're under way.'

**‘How much does this pay?’** ‘Nothing from me...but I’m told G’Trokk will happily reward you each with 1,000 credits if you rescue his family. He can afford it, after all. Not only that, but I’m pretty sure he has plenty of equipment for you aboard the ship. You’ll see what I mean once you’re under way.’

**‘Anything special we need to take?’** ‘Not that I can think of. The colony was underground and if it’s still functional, it should have normal gravity and plenty of air. I’m pretty sure there’s pressure suits and weapons for you on the ship. Ask G’Trokk later. You need to be at docking port A-19 in an hour. Caitlin’s already there in the *Liberty’s Fortune*, waiting to take you to the rendezvous.’

**‘How long do you think this mission will take?’** ‘Maybe a couple of weeks. The ship we need isn’t exactly docked to Babylon 5, so you’ll need to use a circuitous route. Plan for three weeks, just to be safe.’

**‘What if we don’t go?’** She shrugs but seems very disappointed. ‘Nothing. I’ll just find other resources.\* Alison, of course I’ll need you in either case.’ If a Sense Motive check succeeds, the player realises there are no other resources. Theresa is banking entirely on the players taking this assignment, as she has no other options available.

**Others:** The players can interrogate Theresa all they want, but she will not reveal that there is anything else going on, other than a simple rescue. They might get the occasional Sense Motive tweak, but she is not outright lying—just hiding the fact that there is more to this mission than meets the eye.

Meanwhile, as the conversation turns to less important matters, have everyone make a Spot check (DC 30). If anyone succeeds they can act normally during the surprise round that follows this box text:

*You are continuing to talk things over with Theresa, asking for more details about the mission she is planning, when suddenly a Narn walks past. You do not see a lot of Narn in the Nova Nine—apparently British pubs are not a big draw for members of that race—but they do show up occasionally. This one stops, though, and before you can react he draws a pistol and aims it directly at Theresa Cross’s chest!*

The assassin does not say a word as he pulls the trigger. His first action is to fire the gun once (with complete surprise over Theresa Cross) and his second is to drop a flash-bang grenade as he rushes out of the Nova Nine. Patrons scream and rush every which way during the confusion. If not pursued, he quickly disappears into the station and is lost to sight. Meanwhile Theresa lies bleeding and unconscious

## R’Shon

**8<sup>th</sup> Level Narn Agent/2<sup>nd</sup> Level Thenta Makur Assassin**

**Hit Points:** 26

**Initiative:** +4 (+4 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 22 (+12 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +8/+3 melee or +12/+7 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Low-Light Vision, Damage Resistance 3 (armour), Security Systems, Sneak Attack +2d6, Skill Mastery (Escape Artist, Move Silently, Spot)

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +12, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 10

**Skills:** Computer Use +15, Concentration +16, Disguise +13, Gather Information +13, Hide +17, Listen +16, Move Silently +17, Speak Language (Centauri), Spot +16, Survival +5

**Feats:** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (Multi-Part PPG), Weapon Specialisation (Multi-Part PPG)

**Equipment:** Multi-Part PPG, Narn battle suit, two flash-bang grenades, one smoke bomb, suicide tooth

R’Shon is an assassin hired to kill Theresa Cross over a month ago. Unable to locate her anywhere else, he came to Babylon 5 to wait for her eventual return to the station. He has been waiting here watching Alison Fernandez, waiting for his opportunity. If pursued he employs flash-bang and smoke grenades to cover his escape. If chased he fights a running battle. If cornered he kills himself to avoid interrogation.

on the floor, barely clinging to life. She takes 28 points of damage in the Narn’s cowardly sneak attack.

After the attempt on Theresa’s life, R’Shon disappears into the bowels of Babylon 5. Theresa is rushed to Medlab, where Garibaldi puts her in a private room. Alison accompanies her along with any players who want to go with them. In Medlab, Theresa stirs. ‘Go,’ she gasps. ‘I’ll be better when you get back.’

At this, Alison wants to leave within the hour as originally planned. The players may insist on staying to hunt for R’Shon (assuming he escaped). If they do, she agrees to go talk to G’Trokk at Docking Bay A-19 and try to delay the flight as long as she can. Meanwhile an all-points bulletin has been issued for the Narn assassin but no one has seen him since he vanished into the lifts. He is actually in disguise, hiding in Downbelow in the guise of the same out-of-luck Narn lurker he has been for the last month. The players have



almost no chance to locate him in the scant hours they have available unless they call upon all their contacts and helpers in Downbelow and get lucky in a Gather Information check (DC 31). In that case they can track R'Shon to a corner of Downtown, the unfinished, mostly uninhabited section of Brown Sector nearest the waste reclamation machinery. He will initially pretend to be shuffling along in a ragged cloak, but as soon as he is challenged he opens fire and dives for cover. If seriously challenged and unable to escape he commits suicide. Even in the unlikely event that he is captured, which is all but impossible considering his combat skills, he will not reveal who hired him even if probed by a telepath. That section of his mind is totally blank.

Should the players be unable to find R'Shon within a couple of hours, Alison calls to say the *Liberty's Fortune* has to leave straightaway. Mr. Garibaldi and Dr. Franklin decide to deal with the assassin by issuing a statement that a woman named Theresa Cross was brutally attacked and murdered in the Nova Nine Pub. They then carefully hide Theresa in a nearby cabin, so that if the assassin comes back he finds no trace of her in Medlab. Furthermore her 'coffin' will be shipped back to Earth the next day on a fast shuttle, with Security forces arrayed to catch the assailant if he tries to verify her death. Garibaldi insists he will be able to catch Ms. Cross's attacker and keep her alive while she recovers in secret. Finally, to drive the final nail in the coffin, Theresa awakens one more time and begs the players to proceed with the rescue attempt. 'This is more important than you know,' she mutters before dropping back into unconsciousness.

Should the players attempt to telepathically contact her while she is out, they detect only that she is sincere in that final statement. Her emotions reveal that she desperately wants the mission to be a success. On a deep scan, through a haze of sedative-induced dreams, the telepath sees visions of a great rain of fire cutting a swath across Earth. Against them stand a few ships, and at the helm of one is Theresa Cross. The overwhelming feeling is that if this mission fails there may be nothing left to stand against this darkness.

With this in mind the players should proceed to the *Liberty's Fortune* and set off, leaving Theresa to convalesce in her secure room.

## Encounter Two: Occupied Territory

Aboard the *Liberty* the players find not only the pilot Caitlin Schulz but also a Narn named G'Trokk. He introduces himself and stays on the ship as it takes off, but asks the players to hold their questions until the vessel is under way. After that he sits down and makes himself available. Since G'Trokk will be available as a Non-Player Character

throughout this module, his statistics are found in the back of this book in Appendix B.

**'What's your story?'** 'My name is G'Trokk. I was an officer stationed at our starbase in Quadrant 14 up until a year ago. Then I was assigned as adjutant to T'Kron—you would call him a general—in the new effort to colonise the fourth planet of the system. We called it S'hanthus, which means 'Place of Caves'. We were sinking a geothermal power tap when I was called away—and then the treacherous Centauri assaulted Quadrant 14! Now my family is trapped underground, in hiding, praying for rescue.'

**'How do you know they're still alive?'** 'I don't know for sure, of course, but I know there were enough supplies to hold out this long. If the geothermal power tap was installed correctly, they should have virtually unlimited energy. Also, since there hasn't been a single word about S'hanthus's discovery, I can only hope they haven't been discovered.'

**'So you really don't know?'** 'No, I don't know for sure, but I am confident.'

**'Have you tried to get to them before?'** 'Yes, twice. The first time I tried to sneak into the system in a civilian vessel, but was challenged at the border and forced to retreat. The second time I accompanied a small Narn reconnaissance-in-

### The Haven Patrol Boat Nemesis

The Centauri Haven was originally designed as a fast border patrol ship but has since expanded into a number of other missions within the Republic. Havens are used as picket forces, police vessels, light transports, training vessels and for just about any other task that does not require a capital ship. This particular Haven, named the *Nemesis*, has clearly seen a number of fights, for its hull is scarred and blackened with weapons fire. Where it came from is anybody's guess.

**Statistics:** Colossal Spacecraft; hp 180; DV 12 (-8 size, +10 agility); DR 15; Spd -; Acc 5; Dec 4; Han +2; Sensor +6; Stealth 17; SQ Long Ranged; Cargo 15,000 lb.; 1 Officers, 3 Pilots, 4 Sensor Operators, 12 Crewmen

**Weapons:** Matter Cannon; Boresight; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 20+2d10; Critical 18-20; Range 5  
Four Twin-linked Particle Arrays; 2 Front, 2 Rear; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 10+2d10; Critical 20; Range 3

force unit that was severely mauled by a patrol. We barely escaped with our lives.'

**'So how are we going to get in this time?'** 'Easily. This time we have a Centauri ship. I couldn't tell you on the station, of course, for security reasons. However, very shortly we will be docking with a Haven-class patrol ship which will slip into Centauri space using codes provided to me by your friend and mentor, Ms. Theresa Cross.'

**'What can you tell us about this S'hanthus place?'** 'It's on the fourth planet, a corrupted world with a very toxic atmosphere. There is life there and much of it is underground, in the extensive cave network. We will take a shuttle into one of the larger caves, where we can stay hidden from passing Centauri patrol vessels. Once there, it should be a simple matter to make our way into the caverns. In fact, there will probably be sentries, but as soon as they see me they'll let us in without any trouble.'

**'How many people are in the colony? A Haven can't carry that many people.'** 'At the time I departed, no more than a few dozen. Unless a great many more were added later, I don't anticipate any problems.'

**'Who's flying the ship?'** 'A number of Narn volunteers. They have seen many atrocities committed by the Centauri and they know what will happen if my family is discovered. They will be tortured and executed as spies. We must save them!'

**'Why do you need us?'** 'Mostly because I need a team of troubleshooters to handle any potential problems. However, if you want to know the truth, it's because Theresa Cross insisted that you come. That was one of her conditions for aiding me.'

**'And what kind of aid is she giving you?'** 'Isn't it obvious? She's the one with the ship!'

**'Where did she get a Centauri Haven?'** 'I don't know and I don't care. It doesn't matter, as long as it gets the job done.'

**Other:** The players can ask other questions as well, and G'Trokk will answer to the best of his ability. The only time he lies is if they ask directly about his family. In that case he claims he has a mate and two children. Otherwise, when he refers to his 'family', he is always talking about his friends in the Rangers now marooned on S'hanthus.

If the players have any Centauri among their group, G'Trokk is surprisingly unconcerned with their presence. He trusts Theresa Cross not to betray him and assumes the players consider their loyalty to her above that of their race. In this

## Tareen Feraz

3<sup>rd</sup> Level Centauri Agent

**Hit Points:** 11

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 17 (+7 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +1 melee or +5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Security Systems, Sneak Attack +1d6

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 8, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16

**Skills:** Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +9, Escape Artist +8, Gather Information +9, Intimidate +9, Move Silently +8, Search +8

**Feats:** Endurance, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (PPG)

**Equipment:** Padded armour, PPG pistol, Centauri headdress and officer's uniform

Tareen is one of Theresa Cross's allies, in much the same vein as Caitlin Schulz and Alison Fernandez. He was one of those who discovered the existence of the Rangers and brought G'Trokk into the fold. That a Narn and Centauri can work so closely together seems a striking incongruity but Tareen has proven himself by his secret efforts to rescue hundreds of Narn civilians from threatened systems. G'Trokk trusts him implicitly, as he should, and it is partially their friendship that has taught the crusty Narn to look beyond mere appearances.

Tareen is a bright-faced, excitable Centauri who enjoys a good adventure as much as anyone. He keeps his hair cut short in the human manner, enabling him to easily disguise himself as a human if the need arises. He also possesses a wig that fastens to his head should he need to appear as a Centauri figure. He employs this disguise, as well as a stolen uniform, to act as the captain of the *Nemesis* should the ship be challenged.

he is trusting somewhat blindly, but at this point he is quite desperate. Should anyone ask why he is so willing to trust a Centauri, he replies that he never judges anyone by their appearance, only their deeds.

After a day's flight the *Liberty's Fortune* arrives in the Sigma 957 system, an out-of-the-way place where travellers are instructed to stay close to the jump transfer point. Strange sights and storms are frequently reported in the area and the number of ships going missing in this system is extremely high. Nonetheless, G'Trokk wastes no time asking Caitlin to



fly the ship towards an asteroid an hour's flight away. Caitlin agrees but worriedly keeps her eyes on the control panel.

The flight is without incident. As the players approach the asteroid a tight-beam signal is received by the *Liberty*. G'Trokk sends a reply and a Centauri Haven lifts off the surface of the rock, quickly rendezvousing with the players' ship. The Haven is too small for anything larger than a shuttle to land aboard, so the *Liberty* docks externally. G'Trokk invites the players to follow him through the airlock but warns them that this is their last chance to change their minds. As soon as they follow—assuming that they do—he orders the doors closed and the two ships separated.

Caitlin Schulz stays behind in the *Liberty's Fortune* to await their eventual return. She agrees to stay for up to two weeks. If the players do not come back she will be forced to consider them lost. Under no circumstances is she to attempt a rescue trip. With a heavy heart she says farewell and lands the *Liberty* on the same asteroid where the Haven was hiding.

The *Nemesis's* crew of twelve is made up of nine Narn, two humans and—surprisingly—one Centauri. G'Trokk is clearly the ship's captain and the others defer to him the moment he arrives. His first officer is T'Fen, a very thin Narn with a hawk nose and unwavering dedication to the mission. The Centauri, whose name is Tareen Feraz, is apparently an advisor to the others. He does not sit at any of the stations but seems to linger about as if waiting for something to do.

Once everyone is aboard and introductions are made, the ship sets off for the Arduun system, a trip that takes a day and a half. During this period the Narn and other humans keep to themselves, but Tareen makes an effort to entertain the players. He explains that the others are thinking of this as a military operation so they are trying to keep their distance, but he is not part of the military. Possible questions and answers are listed below.

**'What's your story?'** 'I don't agree with the war. There's too much going on that's unexplained. The Narns had no reason to attack when they did—it's like they were pushed into it. It's like somebody else is behind the scenes, pulling the strings, encouraging the fighting. I'm one of a few Centauri who don't like where this is going. I've been operating what the humans call an 'Underground Railroad', helping Narn civilians escape their doomed planets. That's why I agreed to come along on this mission. Plus, I have some connections, so I know some codes that should get us past the sentries.'

**'What's your mission on the ship?'** 'I'm the token Centauri...I'll do all the talking to any Centauri ships we run across and as long as none of the codes have been changed in the last couple of weeks, we should get through all right.

Plus, if it comes to that, I'm pretty sneaky when I want to be.'

**'Isn't G'Trokk putting a lot of faith in you?'** 'Sure, but it's justified, I assure you. I could've betrayed him a long time ago. We've been through too much for that. I don't like seeing people mistreated and what the Republic is doing to Narn civilians makes me sick.'

**'This all seems too simple to bother including us. What's G'Trokk hiding?'** Tareen sighs and glances about as if worried about being overheard. 'Okay, listen, I'll tell you a little secret. This 'family' of G'Trokk's isn't actually made up of his relatives. They're a group of scouts he was training with—sort of like a military organisation but much more broad in scope. Not even Narns, actually. Humans, mostly—and Minbari, if you can believe that. Your Captain Sheridan knows about them, although I seriously doubt he told you. Like me, they're opposed to the war and they share the same convictions as your Theresa Cross.'

**'And those convictions are...?'** 'That a much greater conflict is coming...one that threatens to overwhelm all our people. Not just humans, or Narns, or Centauri, but everyone.'

**'What conflict is that?'** 'Oh, I'm afraid it's not up to me to explain any further. I may have already said too much. We must change the subject, yes?'

**Other:** Tareen answers any other questions to be best of his ability but will not explain anything more about the coming war and never uses the term 'Rangers' to describe the group G'Trokk has come to rescue. Remember, at this point in the *Babylon 5* storyline very few people on Babylon 5 actually know about the existence and purpose of the Rangers. Unless the players have encountered a Ranger before or have been told about them by a high-ranking ambassador or member of the command staff, they are likely to be entirely ignorant of the Rangers.

After the *Nemesis* reaches the Arduun system, it is held up at the jump transfer point. Arduun was once a Narn system but was captured early in the war. Unwilling to put any significant military forces in Sigma 957—a kind of Bermuda Triangle of space—and unable to conquer Kotok in direct assaults, the Centauri have instead withdrawn to Arduun while their spearheads advance on Homeworld through other routes. Thus Arduun now contains a large military base and a garrison of more than a dozen warships.

When the Haven arrives it is naturally challenged and here Tareen takes over. He replaces G'Trokk in the command chair and the other Narn are carefully kept out of sight. Furthermore the two human crewmen are fitted with false Centauri hairstyles and other costumes, staying in the

background to appear innocuous. Tareen gives the password and there is a worrisome moment as the Centauri ask the *Nemesis* to stand by for boarding. However, Tareen does not flinch and after a few seconds they get clearance to continue on their journey. He then explains that the boarding thing is a standard trick...anyone trying to slip by would likely panic at that point. His calmness only served to convince the border guards that everything was all right.

After that the ship proceeds on to Quadrant 14.

## Encounter Three: A Question of Obedience

The trip to Quadrant 14 takes almost two days. At the conclusion of the trip the *Nemesis* drops through the jump gate into the middle of a battle. Close to the former colony world, the Centauri have begun building a Kraken-class starbase. A Narn fleet has dropped into the system to knock out the base before its construction can be finished. Dozens of Narn vessels are circling the area, darting in to fire long-range lasers or energy mines, sometimes making forays in amongst the defenders to knock out mines or blast orbiting satellites. A force of ten Centauri ships, including one Primus-class battlecruiser, has circled the wagons around the base and is trying to hold out until relief arrives.

The Games Master should not explain all these details at once, though. He should only explain that dozens of blips are crowding the sensors and the distant flashes of weapons fire and explosions can be seen on the starfield ahead. Then read this box text:

*Within minutes of your arrival an anxious Centauri voice comes over the intercom. Those of you who can speak Centauri hear the following—the rest of you can translate later. ‘This is Admiral Priya of the Royal Furor, commanding the Quadrant 14 garrison. I am assuming command of your ship, whoever you are. Upon your right flank you will note three Frazi-class fighters picking at the fringes of our minefield. All of our own fighters have been destroyed and none of our other ships can be spared to deal with this threat. Destroy those fighters for the glory of the Republic and then report to me for further instructions. You have your orders, Captain! Royal Furor out.’*

Tareen tries to respond but gets no answer, for the fight is continuing in earnest. He suggests that the players agree to fight the Frazis and notes that a Haven is more than a match for those three fighters. G’Trokk demurs, for he does not want to make war against his own people. ‘These are trying times for everyone,’ Tareen reminds him, but G’Trokk finally

looks to the players for advice. If they fight the Frazis they will surely take damage and may still wind up involved in the main conflict anyway. The alternative, of course, is to ignore Priya’s orders and let the fighters continue blowing up mines. Every minute or so the fast-moving vehicles take aim and blast another mine, gradually nibbling away at the starbase’s flank defences.

Although G’Trokk does not leave the decision up to the players, he eventually winds up taking whatever option they recommend. If the players do not make a choice, he goes whichever way they seem to be leaning—or, if they are completely apathetic, just flip a coin. The two possible solutions each have varying effects on the rest of the module.

**If the players avoid the Frazis**, G’Trokk flies the Haven out to the fourth planet and passes behind it, where he heads for the surface in his shuttle. Aware that he cannot tarry long, Tareen then returns to attack the Frazis, later telling Priya that he had conflicting orders from a higher source. When Priya asks what those orders were, Tareen says he is under strict instructions not to discuss them with anyone—least of all a garrison commander. The defence force then appropriates the Haven, where its fate depends on how much time the players waste in the caves.

**If the players attack the Frazis**, the fighters engage the ship while avoiding the Haven’s overlapping fire arcs as much as possible. They also attack at high speed and from behind where the matter cannon cannot track. Still, they should not

### S’hanthus

The fourth planet of Quadrant 14, known as S’hanthus, is located about as far from its sun as Mars is from Sol. Unlike Mars, however, S’hanthus has a thick atmosphere that is laced with toxic elements. Anyone breathing the acidic gases must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) every minute or lose 1d4 points of Constitution. The planet otherwise has normal gravity and according to G’Trokk the poisonous nature of the air has been filtered out in the deeper caves where the colony was constructed.

There is animal life on S’hanthus but it consists of lower forms that possess thick, hairy hides and interlocking chitinous armour plates. A cross between insects and reptiles, the creatures have no external sensory organs, instead depending upon vibrations, odours and even radar senses to guide them to their prey. Fortunately for the players, they do not need to spend a lot of time on the surface.



## Tunnel Worm

**Character Level:** 4 (12 hp)

**Initiative:** +3 (+3 Dex)

**Speed:** 20 ft. (burrow 10 ft.)

**DV:** 19 (+3 Reflex, +6 Natural Armour)

**Attacks:** +4 melee (2d6 bite)

**Special Qualities:** Damage Reduction 4, Burrowing, Reach 10 ft.

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 2

**Skills:** Hide +16, Move Silently +20

**Feats:** Alertness, Improved Grapple, Tremorsense

These mindless worms are covered with interlocking chitin armour plates. Their heads are spade-like and heavy front claws aid in the creature's ability to tunnel through loose earth and rock. The beast has no eyes or ears but tracks prey by sensing vibrations in the ground and then by scent at close range. While underground it receives a +8 bonus to all Hide and Move Silently checks.

The tunnel worm attacks by flinging most of its body out of the wall like a coiled snake, biting and attempting to establish a hold. Upon any successful hit the creature makes an opposed grapple check against the target. Success indicates it achieves a hold. Once it has a hold, the creature draws the victim back towards the cave wall, scoring 1d6 damage each round ignoring all damage resistance from armour.

Each round after achieving a hold, the worm tries to tug its unfortunate victim into its underground lair. If the creature wins an opposed Strength check on the round after grappling, it pulls the target up against the wall, earning itself one-half cover. If it wins an opposed Strength check on the following round it drags the victim's arm inside the wall, rendering him unable to attack with anything but a light off-hand weapon and earning total cover. Should the worm win a third opposed Strength check it drags the victim entirely into the wall, pinning him and starting the process of suffocation. The player's breather mask is torn from his face when he is dragged into the wall and thus he will suffer problems from the atmosphere when he is finally rescued, unless his allies take great pains to cover his face the moment he is dragged back out of the hole.

If the prey wins an opposed grapple check or Escape Artist check taken as a standard action, he breaks free of the creature's grip. The beast can immediately attack again on the following round. A tunnel worm reduced to three or fewer hit points retreats immediately.

be a match for the Haven's firepower. If the *Nemesis* does get into trouble the players are instructed to get in the shuttle and escape. G'Trokk accompanies them but the rest of the crew stay aboard to fight to the bitter end. After this the shuttle can escape the battle by running to the fourth planet, where they can at least try to contact the survivors of S'hanthus.

Should the Haven beat the Frazis, Admiral Priya contacts the ship again, thanking Tareen for his assistance and demanding he report to the base for absorption into the garrison fleet. Tareen replies that he has to finish his original mission but will return within the hour. Priya agrees—reluctantly—and Tareen flies the *Nemesis* behind the fourth planet, where the rescue shuttle can be launched. He then reports to Priya, and again, his fate depends on how long the players take to complete their main mission. However, because Tareen obeyed the initial order, he earns the players at least a little bit of bonus time when evaluating what happens during Encounter Seven.

## Encounter Four: Attack of the Worms

Regardless of what the players do with regards to the Frazi fighters, they wind up being taken by shuttle to S'hanthus while the *Nemesis* heads to join the battle as ordered by the Centauri fleet commander. Tareen, now in command of the *Nemesis*, promises to wait for a secret signal, whereupon he will try to break free of the fight and come make the pickup. Hopefully, he says, he can stay on the fringes of the fight, leaving him free to leave when he needs to. Should he fail to return, the players are to try to make the flight through hyperspace in the shuttle, which should—theoretically—be able to make it back to the *Liberty's Fortune* safely as long as it avoids combat.

In any event, G'Trokk takes the shuttle down, insisting on doing so even if the players have a better Pilot skill than he does. After all, he is the one who knows where the entrance to the colony is. He deliberately waits until the *Nemesis* is out of scanning range behind S'hanthus before concluding landing operations. Any player can make a Pilot check (DC 18) to observe this behaviour. If they notice, G'Trokk explains that keeping the entrance secret from Tareen just ensures that nothing can go wrong if he or his crew fall into the wrong hands.

After some circling he finally locates the right spot and settles the shuttle inside the entrance to a fairly large cavern. Anyone looking outside through the portholes can see several dark tunnels leading out of the cave's rear. Scans show three passages but nothing else of interest. Sensors just do not penetrate through the thick rock. 'Of course not,' G'Trokk explains. 'That's why this place would've made such a good colony site. Nobody can scan it.'

G'Trokk also explains that the three cave passageways all come together in a large central cavern where a heavy door blocks entry into the colony itself. The door will be guarded, but G'Trokk's presence will be enough to convince the guards to let the group through. The risk, of course, is that the Centauri have already discovered the colony and are lying in wait for the players. G'Trokk tells everyone to put on breather masks and be ready for anything.

As the players make their way through the curving, rocky corridors to the colony entrance, a group of tunnelling worms attacks by burrowing through the cave walls. The first tunnel worm attacks with surprise while five others appear at random locations along the edge of the wall. A worm that grapples its target tries to pull the unfortunate victim back inside where the prey can be devoured.

After the players finish with the worms, they can proceed on to the main door that provides entrance to the 'colony'—actually a hidden Ranger training facility. Should G'Trokk fall in battle with the worms, the players will have to travel on without him to guide them. Otherwise he takes the lead once again and heads for the end of the interconnected caves.

## Encounter Five: The Complex

The Ranger training camp is constructed within a series of caves in which the trainees would be subjected to a variety of tests such as getting along in total darkness, sneaking and hiding, climbing, squeezing through narrow passageways and doing battle with a variety of opponents. The facility is quite primitive, but as they say in the Anla'shok, adversity is the crucible within which a good Ranger is forged.

What G'Trokk said about the geothermal power tap is true—the Rangers were indeed trying to sink just such a power system into the deeper recesses of the virtually endless caves under S'hanthus. By using natural power, they would make their base all but impossible to detect from outside. The Minbari fusion plant they were using for energy was to be kept in reserve but in fact is still active.

Why? Because the Rangers, much like the dwarves in the Mines of Moria, dug too deep and released a great evil. Hidden within the recesses of S'hanthus, creatures of Shadow lay in slumber waiting for the time when they would rise again to fight in the Great War. The Rangers believe they only face one of the beasts, but there are in fact two, though they are never seen together. Thus the surviving Rangers believe the creature is capable of moving at high speed to virtually any location in the caves. They are now hiding in a fortified cavern that once served as a supply room. They are all on one-quarter rations and are virtually starving. Were it

not for the steady dripping of water from the ceiling in one corner of the cave, they would long since be dead.

Of course, the players do not know any of this, but it soon becomes clear that something is wrong. When G'Trokk approaches the huge, sealed door at the entrance to the caves, he calls out to identify himself, speaking first in Nam and then in English. When there is no response he moves closer. A Spot check (DC 22) notes either of two small automated guns located five feet up the wall on either side of the door. These guns move to track anyone who approaches the portal, but do not fire. G'Trokk approaches them boldly, calling out a greeting, but no one answers and the door remains sealed.

Once at the door he types in a command sequence, but again nothing happens. He frowns. 'This shouldn't happen,' he says. 'They wouldn't change this unless something went wrong. And where are the sentries?'

The players can attempt to pick the electronic lock but this requires a Technical (electronics) check (DC 30). If they fail by five or more or try to take 10 or take 20 on the check, the guns begin firing at anyone within sight of the door. Each gun acts as a PPG Mark 10. The players can, of course, cover up the guns, but the defences will immediately open fire, blasting first through whatever covered them before proceeding to attack anything moving within their field of fire. The guns have DR 10, 10 hit points and a Break DC of 25. If the players attack the guns and do not destroy them, this also triggers their firing sequence. The only way to silence the guns without risk is to pick them off simultaneously or to block them with something so strong it cannot be easily shot through.

The door itself has the strength of a bulkhead (DR 20, hit points 80, break DC 35) should the players be unable to get through the lock. Note that the lock itself has only DR 5, 8 hit points and a Break DC of 20, so attempting to destroy the guns with explosives—other than a shaped charge of some sort—is likely to smash the lock as well.

After the players get through the door they find themselves inside the small Anla'shok training area. Read the following box text:

*Beyond the door, the caves continue. Two corridors branch out to the sides while a larger open area awaits ahead of you. The natural cave system seems to have been hollowed out and enlarged to provide at least some comfort for the trainees and their teachers. Structural bracings are evident about every five feet or so and functioning lighting is emplaced along the ceilings in all places. The room directly in front of you appears to be organised for defence, with several stone fixtures in place to act as natural cover for anyone facing the door. The whole area seems empty except for one grisly*



sight—a desiccated Minbari body lying on its back about twenty feet ahead.

The various rooms of the complex are described in more detail below.

## 1. Entrance Room

This was where visitors arrived and were greeted by Anla'shok personnel. Several cut stone blocks serve as cover if anyone wished to defend the door, but there is no one here now. Like all the other rooms on this level, there are power conduits built into the walls near floor level, but all that is left of these are some loose wires. Actually there used to be sensor and communication equipment here, used to identify anyone approaching from beyond the wall and to contact any shuttle that might land. All of this has been taken to the

fortified cavern on the next level down to be converted into the force field generator that is keeping the Rangers alive.

There is a Minbari body here, about 20 feet from the main entrance. The body is little more than a dried-out husk. Anyone making a Medical check (DC 21) learns that every drop of fluid has been totally drained away. If the body is cut open, anyone checking will note that all the victim's internal organs are missing. If the players participated in the side scenario that links to 'The Long Dark', this will sound uncomfortably familiar—but that creature did not also drain fluids from its prey.

The Minbari is wearing what at first appear to be simple black robes, but these are actually Ranger's robes (see *Point of No Return*, p.134). Clutched in one hand is a weapon that looks like a high-tech, high-quality quarterstaff—actually a masterwork denn'bok, but the players probably will not recognise it as such unless they have encountered Rangers before. Attached to the robes is a square-shaped pin made of a white metal surrounding a smooth green stone. An Appraise check (DC 15) shows that the value of this bulky and gaudy piece of jewellery is 50-100 credits. This is of course a Ranger pin.

## 2. Fusion Power Plant

This room is rectangular and across the centre is the one piece of high-tech equipment in the entire facility—a fusion power plant of obvious Minbari make. Anyone making a Knowledge (structural engineering) check (DC 15) identifies it as similar to the sort of power plant used to provide backup energy to small Minbari structures. The machine's nature is such that it could be easily broken down into several smaller pieces and carried into the caves through the path the players took to get here. The power plant is humming along normally and wires all along the floor and running up the walls into vents and lights testify to what is keeping the air refreshed and the lighting functioning.

Behind the power plant a human Ranger named Tobias crouches, denn'bok at the ready. He is half-crazed from hunger and fear. A day ago, he and a fellow Ranger attempted to make a run for the mess hall to gather supplies after the others in the fortress below made a diversionary foray into the deeper caves. He does not know there is a second creature and simply believes the first caught up to him in the Entrance Room, where his friend and teacher fell to the beast's energy-draining attack. He retreated here and has been afraid to leave the power plant. For some reason the creature will not approach him, although it does occasionally put in an appearance to unnerve him.

Upon spotting the players, Tobias (in his half-mad state) decides they are invaders come to destroy the facility. He does not recognise G'Trokk and assumes any player who

### Tobias

5<sup>th</sup> Level Human Soldier/1<sup>st</sup> Level Anla'shok Ranger

Hit Points: 25

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 17 (+7 Reflex)

Attacks: +8/+3 melee or +9/+4 ranged

Special Qualities: Covering Fire, Damage Resistance 2 (robes)

Saves: Fort +3\*, Ref +7, Will +3

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 16, Con 8\*, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 10

Skills: Concentration +8\*, Hide +13, Listen +5, Move Silently +13, Spot +10

Feats: Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (denn'bok), Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Weapon Focus (PPG), Weapon Focus (unarmed combat)

Equipment: Ranger robes, Ranger pin, denn'bok

Tobias has lost four points of Con to the Dark Hunter's special attack. Items marked with an asterisk above reflect this loss. If he is healed his maximum Con is 12 and his skills and saving throws should be adjusted accordingly.

Tobias is a Ranger trainee who was inducted into the ranks of the Rangers just prior to the attack of the Dark Hunters. Facing dwindling food supplies in the fortress below, he and his teacher Lavonas (the dead Minbari in Area #1) attempted to reach the mess hall to collect more rations but were ambushed in the Entrance Room. There Lavonas deliberately gave his own life so that Tobias could escape, but he collapsed in exhaustion by the fusion plant and now, drained by fatigue, hunger and thirst, he is descending into madness.

is not human or Minbari is automatically the enemy, going after them first. Lacking any such target, he instead blindly lashes out at G'Trokk. Naturally during the fight G'Trokk tries to convince Tobias that he has come to rescue him and to stop fighting but the Ranger has totally lost it. The only way to stop him is to immobilise him somehow or knock him out. G'Trokk insists that everybody use nonlethal means to do battle with the thirst-crazed Ranger.

Following the fight, a Medical check (DC 15) identifies that Tobias is—in addition to any wounds he has just sustained—suffering from severe dehydration and the beginnings of malnutrition. Anyone telepathically scanning him gets nothing but hazy views of a barely visible beast attacking with glowing claws and burning teeth. These delusions—if that is what they are—overwhelm all other thoughts.

Once Tobias is restrained (or brought back to consciousness after his defeat) he struggles for about a minute before finally breaking down in tears. G'Trokk then asks him what is going on. Tobias tells his story:

*The man in front of you lies in a heap, a broken shell. Warily he looks up at you through eyes that seem halfway dead. With halting words he begins to speak.*

*'It was a beast,' he says with a shudder. 'A creature straight out of Hell. We freed it when we were drilling the core tap...it killed three of us before we even knew what was happening. You can't even see it, except when it's feeding...draining you...sucking out everything from inside the body like a leech...turning red as it fills up with your blood! We're helpless here...helpless! We couldn't call the Narns for rescue...their base is gone! Blown up by the Centauri! We sent a signal to the others...but they didn't answer...too much communications jamming. I'm sorry I attacked you...I see now you must've come to rescue us...but you'll never defeat that...that thing out there! It won't let you get back to your ship. You can count on that. It's watching the doors. It let you in...but it'll never let you out!'*

*At this he collapses gasping and closes his eyes. You try to ask him more but he has fallen unconscious again.*

After this Tobias cannot be roused for at least an hour. If the players then awaken him with a Medical check (DC 15) or by giving him water or stims, he sits up weakly. Following his desperate struggle with the players he is clearly exhausted but if he eats some rations and quenches his thirst, this state reverts to merely fatigued. He remains fatigued until he can eat another meal and rest for eight hours. In the meantime he will help the players as best he can and answer their questions, but he will not leave the fusion room unless the players agree to help him complete his mission—collecting food to bring to his compatriots in the fortress cave below.

## Armoured Rat

**Character Level:** 2 (6 hp)

**Initiative:** +3 (+3 Dex)

**Speed:** 20 ft. (burrow 5 ft.)

**DV:** 18 (+4 Reflex, +4 Natural Armour)

**Attacks:** +3 melee (1d4 bite + disease)

**Special Qualities:** Damage Reduction 3, Burrowing, Disease

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 2

**Skills:** Hide +8, Move Silently +8

**Feats:** Alertness

The armoured rat is not a particularly powerful competitor but its bite can deliver a nasty disease known as bleeding acidosis. The affected creature's organs swell and internal bleeding occurs sporadically as the alien organism's waste products wreak havoc on soft tissues. Bleeding acidosis has an incubation period of one day, Fortitude save DC 15, damage 1d4 Con and 1d3 Dex. During the course of the disease the victim secretes a variety of bodily fluids such as blood and mucus through which the disease spreads. Anyone contacting these fluids is also subject to contracting the disease.

If questioned, Tobias tells the players about the facility and the creatures in great detail. Although he admits that his people are called Rangers, he will not describe their mission or training procedures in any way.

## 3. Ranger Quarters

This area contained the quarters for the full-fledged Rangers who ran the facility. This is a single hollowed-out cave with five areas separated by thin, moveable wooden walls for some semblance of privacy. There is also a sixth smaller area for storage. Four of the five quarters areas have Minbari-style sleeping platforms, while the fifth has a simple human-style bed with a mattress and one layer of sheets. Each quarters area has a small cabinet containing clothing and toiletry items. Atop each of the cabinets sit photos or holo-crystals that display various human or Minbari individuals—family members of the Rangers stationed here at the facility. In the quarters assigned to the human there is a small pouch containing 72 credit chits. One of the Minbari cabinets includes an unloaded crystal slivergun and six rounds of ammunition (see *The Minbari Fact Book*, p.138).

The storage room contains a variety of items that might be expected in such a facility—towels, linens, tools, a hand computer, rope and anything else the Games Master might feel appropriate. There are also a few exotic items, mostly



of Minbari manufacture. These include a bag containing 16 air capsules (in case anyone needs to venture to the surface), a medical scanner, four palmlights, two fire extinguishers, a grappling hook, a set of Minbari specialised mining tools, a PPG Model 10 (no ammunition) and a trioptic visor. This last item might prove of use later in the scenario—anyone wearing it while it is set in electromagnetic spectral imaging mode can see the Dark Hunter as a field of purple in the ultraviolet spectrum, thus negating its partial invisibility.

#### 4. Trainee Quarters

This area includes 12 bunk beds, half of which are of the Minbari 'sleeping platform' style. Each has a small footlocker at the end, but these contain only ordinary clothing—the trainees were not allowed to bring anything of value with them to the facility.

Desiccated corpses occupy six of the bunks. After the initial attacks the Dark Hunters withdrew for a short period, sated. The surviving Rangers and trainees brought their dead here for what should have been a temporary period but wound up being semi-permanent. The fact that these individuals did not die in their beds is obvious because the corpses are lying atop the covers. Furthermore, two of them are Minbari, who would not use human beds anyway. All the bodies are wearing ordinary robes and hoods and do not have any Ranger gear.

Since the corpses were laid here the vermin native to S'hanthus have tunnelled in through the floor to feed upon the dried flesh. Five 'armoured rats' are currently lurking underneath one of the corpses, remaining silent due to the approach of a potential threat. A player moving into the far end of the room without going directly to the bodies will notice a fresh burrow near the edge of one of the beds on a Spot check (DC 20). From this he may conclude that something has recently tunnelled into the room. Otherwise anyone inspecting the dead Ranger trainees becomes subject to a surprise attack by the armoured rats as they lurch out from hiding.

#### 5. Mess Hall

This area includes a number of tables used for meals. Nearby cabinets include a variety of dried foods and rations, and there are several large water tanks that collect water flowing in from an underground stream running about 200 feet below the cave. These tanks include sterilisation equipment built into the tank interiors as well as spigots that dispense either cold liquid or water heated almost to a boil. The latter was used to produce warm soup, oatmeal and other hot foods from the condensed material in the ration cabinets.

Off to one side there are three small doors upon which hang signs that read 'unoccupied', written in both Minbari and English. On the opposite side of these plates is the word

'occupied'. These doors lead to lavatories that include toilets, sinks and dry showers. No one is inside but the rooms are functional, if anyone needs to partake.

As the players first enter the mess hall area, read the following box text:

*You enter what was obviously a mess hall combined with a kitchen. There are several tables and chairs arranged loosely in three rows. Along one wall you can see several cabinets as well as three tall tanks that reach almost to the ceiling. As you take this in you suddenly feel very uneasy. Your eyes automatically travel to the far side of the room where a single hallway extends out of the area, curving to the left. The tunnel seems empty, but then, as you watch carefully, you sense movement. There is something there but you cannot quite make it out. A shape of some kind, at least as tall as yourself, but that is all. An instant later whatever it was shimmers and seems to retreat, vanishing around the distant corner. The room is silent, marked only by your worried breathing.*

The Dark Hunter is now watching the players but does not know them or their capabilities, so it is afraid to simply rush to the attack. It is content to lurk in the distance, studying them, learning their weaknesses. Should the players attempt to pursue, it will retreat for now...unless the group unwisely separates, in which case it will come around from another direction and attack any stragglers. Note that the Dark Hunter will not move into the room with the fusion power plant, so the players can always retreat there for safety if they need to. For stats on the Dark Hunter see Encounter Six.

Although there is nothing of any real interest in the Mess Hall, the players may wish to collect some of the rations here for delivery to the cave-fortress below, especially if they have already spoken to Tobias and know how desperate things are getting down there.

#### 6. Training Centre

This open cavern was originally used as a training area for Rangers in combat. There are a variety of dummies, targets, mats and exercise machines scattered liberally throughout the room. Most of these appear to be of human design, although the Minbari do have their share. There is nothing here that can be used as a weapon, but there are plenty of obstacles to provide cover for the Dark Hunter as it keeps an eye on the players.

## Encounter Six: The Dark Hunter

The creatures called Dark Hunters are intelligent beasts made partially of energy, in much the same way as the Shadows and

## Dark Hunter

**Character Level:** 15 (52 hp)

**Initiative:** +11 (+3 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft. (climb 30 ft.)

**Size:** Large (tall) (5 ft. space, 10 ft. reach)

**DV:** 16 (+6 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +15 melee (slam 1d6+5 plus Con drain) x2, Grapple +24

**Special Qualities:** Damage Resistance 20/energy and 5/–, Invisibility, Immune to Cold and Acid, Frightful Presence, Aura of Fatigue, Constitution Drain

**Saves:** Fort +14, Ref +6, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 20, Dex 16, Con 30, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12

**Skills:** Hide +12, Listen +20, Move Silently +24, Spot +20

**Feats:** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Grapple, Lifesense, Superior Initiative

Dark Hunters are ferocious, cunning creatures that prefer to locate weaknesses in their opponents before attacking. They prefer to attack lone targets, assaulting a group only if they feel victory is assured or if desperate for food.

If the Dark Hunter hits its target in melee it can attempt to grapple its opponent. If the grapple succeeds the target is held and suffers 1d6 Con drain every turn unless it breaks free. A victim whose Constitution is reduced to zero in this manner dies, while his fluids and internal soft tissues are drained into the Dark Hunter's body. The Dark Hunter turns briefly reddish-coloured for the next five rounds, negating its invisibility. Meanwhile the subject becomes a dried-up, wasted shell.

The Dark Hunter also has the following traits:

**Damage Resistance:** A Dark Hunter is vulnerable only to energy attacks, such as from a PPG, but even these reduce damage by five points. All other attacks are affected by Damage Resistance 20.

**Immune to Cold and Acid:** The Dark Hunter takes no damage from these attack forms.

**Invisibility:** Dark Hunters normally move about in a state of near invisibility, receiving a +12 bonus to Hide checks. Anyone who spots the creature sees only a vaguely shimmering humanoid shape hanging in the air. As soon as the Dark Hunter moves it disappears again. However, while moving, it can be spotted with ultraviolet sensing equipment, appearing as a very tall purple-coloured blob. If the creature stops moving entirely and takes a full-round action it disappears even from this type of sensing equipment. Should the Dark Hunter attack, it becomes slightly visible as a ferocious-looking clawed 'demon' shape. Creatures attacking in the ensuing round suffer a 20% miss chance instead of the usual 50% miss chance granted by invisibility.

**Frightful Presence:** The sight of the Dark Hunter in its semi-visible state is terrifying. All creatures seeing a Dark Hunter as it attacks must make a Will save (DC 12) or become frightened, fleeing the creature's visage for 1d6 rounds and being shaken for 1d6 rounds thereafter. If the save succeeds by four or less the subject is shaken for 1d6 rounds instead. If the save is made by five or more the subject is immune to that particular Dark Hunter's frightful presence thereafter.

**Aura of Fatigue:** The Dark Hunter draws off vitality from its opponents through its very presence. Any opponent approaching within ten feet of the creature must make a Fortitude save (DC 14) or become fatigued for 2d6 minutes. If the victim is already fatigued through some other natural method (hunger, lack of sleep and so forth) it becomes exhausted for that period. Note that this will likely make Tobias useless in the fight if he gets too close to the creature.

**Constitution Drain:** Any hit from the Dark Hunter drains one point of Constitution through bodily fluids sucked into the creature's semi-solid body. An opponent cannot be dropped below Con 1 by this method. If an opponent is at Con 1 and suffers a hit from the Dark Hunter, the unfortunate victim falls unconscious for 1d6 minutes (no saving throw).



## Tinthatil

6<sup>th</sup> Level Minbari Officer/4<sup>th</sup> Level Anla'Shok Ranger

**Hit Points:** 26

**Initiative:** +3 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 17 (+7 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +12/+7 melee or +12/+7 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Branch Specialisation (ground forces), Rallying Call, Fearless, Application of Terror, Die for the One, Ranger's Authority, Denn'Bok (1d8), Damage Resistance 2 (robes)

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +10

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 16

**Skills:** Concentration +13, Diplomacy +16, Hide +7, Listen +15, Medical +7, Move Silently +7, Pilot +11, Sense Motive +15, Spot +15, Technical (mechanical) +16

**Feats:** Awareness\*, Denn'bok Master\*, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (denn'bok), Improved Unarmed Strike, Intuitive Reflexes\*, Weapon Focus (denn'bok) (Note: An asterisk indicates a feat found in *The Minbari Federation Fact Book*.)

**Equipment:** Ranger robes, Ranger pin, masterwork denn'bok, Minbari fighting knife

Tinthatil was in charge of this training facility when the troubles began. He is also the one who arranged for its construction with G'Trokk. It was Tinthatil who set up the power plant, directed the wiring efforts, sunk the wells and ultimately attempted to drill the geothermal power tap that set loose the Dark Hunters. He blames himself for the results even though he could not possibly have foreseen the release of buried creatures of Shadow.

## Ranger Trainees

5<sup>th</sup> Level Soldiers (2 Minbari, 5 Human)

**Hit Points:** 19

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 15 (+5 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +7 melee or +7 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Covering Fire

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12

**Skills:** Hide +10, Move Silently +10 (plus the humans have Listen +8)

**Feats:** Endurance, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (varies)

**Equipment:** Simple clothing, various hand weapons, one has an empty PPG Mark 10

The seven trainees are presented here as generic fighter types, but the Games Master could expand upon them if he wishes. In the Ranger fashion, they use only first names, never family or

house names. All were recruited for their stealth, fighting ability and willingness to work as part of a team. Both Minbari are from the warrior caste. A brief description of each individual follows, but these can be adjusted as the Games Master sees fit.

**Kaneel:** Thin and wiry, Kaneel is quick to anger but also quick to forgive. He is from Yedor on the Minbari homeworld. Though attracted to Shavani, he is unwilling to make any emotional attachment while still in training and has avoided speaking to her in any way other than as a warrior. Should she perish, he will be quite distraught.

**Shavani:** A Minbari female from Davala Than, she speaks in a honey-sweet voice that makes her an excellent singer. She seems totally unlike the typical Minbari warrior until she draws a weapon and starts fighting, at which point she becomes a combat machine. She is unaware of any interest from Kaneel and would reject him should he make any advances.

**Paul:** Paul is a former ground-pounder from Denmark who fought against the Minbari during the Earth-Minbari War and found them to be tough, admirable, honourable opponents. That he should now be standing aside them as friends strikes him as the height of irony. He and Elena are an item and have promised to get married if they ever get out of their present predicament.

**Elena:** This dark-haired woman is from the Ukraine. She was in the Earth Alliance fleet, serving aboard a Hyperion that was destroyed by a Shadow vessel. Rangers in the area rescued her from a lifepod and she asked to join them to fight against the creatures that killed her friends and crew. The rest of the EA believes she died with her ship.

**Shauna:** A dark-skinned woman from Uganda, Shauna is tall and bulky, a true fighting soldier easily the equal of any man in sheer muscle strength. She speaks very infrequently, as though something has been drained from her soul. She watched her two best friends die at the hands of one of the Dark Hunters, so that could be a partial explanation for her present state.

**Sasha:** Sasha (a man) hails from Moscow and possesses rock-like, craggy features. Easily the oldest of the humans here, he has spent most of his life as a mercenary. During the Earth-Minbari War, he was taken prisoner on Proxima and spent several weeks in a POW camp where he was treated as a sub-human creature. He does not fully trust the Minbari but understands that the Rangers represent perhaps the only chance to survive the coming Shadow War.

the Shadow Beasts from p.103 of this book. They have been hibernating on this planet for almost 1,000 years. Unlike many Shadow allies they did not get the call to reawaken like the others, although this may have been simply because of their depth underground. Now that they *have* awakened, they can feel the subtle pull to Z'ha'dum...but first they need to regain their strength. To do that they are consuming the nearest food supply—the virtually helpless Rangers, who unfortunately do not have a lot of energy weapons with them in the caves.

The two Dark Hunters are not openly hostile to each other but they avoid each other nonetheless. When one attempts to attack, the other watches from hiding. For this reason the Rangers are presently unaware that there is more than one of the beasts. On the rare occasion they have scored damage on one of them, it is impossible to recognise as such.

As the players enter the facility, one of the Dark Hunters is down in the caves below waiting for the Rangers to try to escape so it can pounce. The other is up top watching the arrivals from the shuttle. The one on the upper level, which has fed recently, is willing to let the players wander around for a bit while it takes their measure. The one down below is much hungrier and will not bother waiting. When the players proceed down towards the cave fortress, it attacks as soon as they come into view of the force fields.

If this Dark Hunter drains someone—possibly Tobias, as he is likely to be the weakest potential target—it retreats swiftly into the caves, unwilling to face the rest of the group all at once. However, since draining an opponent requires a grapple, the beast is more likely to fight until most of the players are down before consuming someone. The Dark Hunter will not try to kill anyone if it can avoid doing so—it wants them alive as potential food sources later.

### The Cave Fortress

The Rangers on the lower level have retreated inside a centralised cavern with five exits. Blocking each of the tunnels out, they have emplaced a glowing force field originally used in training exercises to provide an obstacle to be overcome. The Dark Hunters, which cannot stand violent energy or electricity, are unable to approach the fields. Furthermore, because they are not willing to touch the fusion plant or the power lines leading from it to the cave fortress, they cannot bring down these defences. This is what has allowed the one surviving Ranger and the seven trainees inside to survive, albeit in a severely fatigued state. They are almost desperate enough now that they are considering a mass rush to the mess hall, followed by a dash back to the fortress. They anticipate losing half their number in the attempt, but to stay much longer is to surely perish of starvation.

The sole surviving Ranger is Tinthatil, an aging Minbari who was actually in charge of the facility when all this began. The trainees left are Kaneel, Shavani, Paul, Elena, Shauna, Sasha and Victoria. The first two trainees are Minbari, while the others are humans. All are fatigued from hunger, although there is enough water dripping through the natural cave roof that they have been able to slake their thirst and stay alive. The 'fortress', such as it is, contains a few boxes (one of which is being used as a makeshift privy), several sheets and blankets, a broken communications relay and a small quantity of dried meat rations. The skeletons of three dead armoured rats testify to how desperate these survivors are for food.

Once the players arrive in the main cave, notice the force fields and come under attack, they have three options: fight, retreat or hurry ahead to the fortress. If they attempt the former, the beast proves a terrifying opponent that seems to be able to shrug off anything but the most powerful blows. The creature does not retreat and fights on until dead or until the players flee, at which point it drains one of the fallen and retreats to lurk in the shadows.

If the players retreat, the beast dogs their heels until they get to the fusion power room, which is the only place they will be safe from its attacks. After that it feeds on anyone who has fallen in the fight. During the retreat, G'Trokk will sacrifice himself to save the players if he must, battling on as though possessed.

If the players escape into the fortress, the beast hides again and waits to ambush them as they depart. It strikes in a narrow hallway if it can and if not, it comes up on the rear of the group as they approach the exit. Meanwhile the second Dark Hunter awaits at the final door, producing a fight in which the players are sandwiched between both of these horrible beasts. If they brought enough weapons and arm the Rangers they can probably win this fight, but it should be devastatingly tough. If one perishes, the other will likely retreat if the defenders appear to have the upper hand, following the same path described in the next paragraph.

Should the first Dark Hunter die in the lower caves, the second—watching from the shadows—realises it is out of its league. Instead of attacking such a well-armed group, it follows them out of the caves and sneaks aboard the shuttle. Even here it will not attack, afraid that it will be overwhelmed in such close quarters. Since the players believe they killed the 'lone' Dark Hunter and are now home free, they will have no clue that a second one is being carried along with them into the next encounter.

However, depending on what happens next, this could be a good thing...



## Encounter Seven: Captured!

While the players were in the caves, Tareen has been busy with the *Nemesis*. Just exactly how busy depends entirely upon how much time the players took to accomplish their mission. As a basic synopsis, what happened to Tareen is this: He reported to Priya, the Centauri fleet admiral, and was given an assignment to hunt down rogue Frazi fighters. To avoid becoming decisively engaged, Tareen stayed near the minefield and tried to escape combat. Unfortunately a flight of six Frazi-class fighters engaged the Haven while attempting to penetrate the starbase's defences. This left the Haven with ten points of structural damage and a ruined matter cannon.

Unfortunately, after the fight Tareen mollified his Narn crewmen—who were miffed at having to fight more of their own countrymen—by spending time scooping up escape pods instead of moving to engage more fighters. Admiral Priya took notice of this and ordered the *Nemesis* to report to him at once. Tareen knew the game was up so he tried to flee, but was intercepted by two other Centauri ships. The *Nemesis* was boarded and the Narn crew (and surviving fighter pilots) were taken aboard another ship as prisoners.

Next the Centauri interrogated Tareen, but he remained silent. With no telepaths available in this military force, Admiral Priya was unable to get any information. He did, however, observe the launch of the shuttle earlier and now suspects there is a secret Narn base hidden on S'hanthus. Furthermore, Tareen is obviously a spy, so he deserves execution—but first he is going to do one final task for the Republic. He is going to lure out the rest of the Narn insurgents when they return in their shuttle.

All of this took a while, of course. Depending on how much time the players have taken, they could emerge from the caves at one of three points.

### Option #1: The Players Are Quick About It

If the players are lightning fast, rescuing the Rangers and hurrying back to the shuttle with all due haste (in the Games Master's opinion), they arrive as the *Nemesis* is engaging the six Frazi fighters. As soon as he finishes them off, Tareen moves to rendezvous with the shuttle after collecting the Narn escape pods. At this, Admiral Priya becomes suspicious and sends a Vorchan-class cruiser to intercept the *Nemesis*. The players are then faced with the painful realisation that the jump gate lies on the other side of a much more powerful vessel that is ordering them to stand down.

In worse news, the Haven has now suffered damage that has weakened its superstructure by ten points and knocked out the matter cannon. A player with engineering experience can

make a Technical (engineering) check to effect short-term repairs that will allow the weapon at least some functionality. The DC he beats in the check determines how effective the weapon is:

DC	Effectiveness of repairs
0-10	The weapon catastrophically fails when fired, scoring five additional points of structural damage on the <i>Nemesis</i>
11-15	The weapon can fire one time at a -2 penalty to hit before failing permanently.
16-20	The weapon fires once at no penalty and a second time at a -4 penalty to hit. After that it is useless.
21-25	The weapon fires once at no penalty. Successive firings suffer a cumulative -1 penalty to hit.
26-30	The weapon is repaired well enough to fire normally for the next few minutes, but it will still eventually fail unless repaired at a starbase or other facility.
31+	The weapon is fully repaired. Apparently the damage was not as severe as it first appeared!

The players do have surprise on their side but the Vorchan's plasma accelerator can easily make mincemeat of the Haven. If the players do not elude the pursuing cruiser quickly and escape into the jump gate, they will be disabled and forced to surrender. Move on to Encounter Eight.

Should the players escape this challenge and return to Babylon 5, they appear to have succeeded in their mission. However, they may well have an unknown hitchhiker—the second Dark Hunter! In this case the creature waits until it can get loose on Babylon 5, where it begins a reign of terror on the station. The players will have to hunt it down and destroy it in much the same way as the creature in 'The Long Dark'. If the Games Master wishes to prolong this hunt, the beast—which feels the pull of Z'ha'dum—will eventually try to escape the station on a ship heading in that direction. The players may then be forced to chase after it, leading to a final showdown with the Dark Hunter somewhere in the dark void of space.

### Option #2: The Players Moved at Moderate Speed

If the players moved reasonably well on S'hanthus but took at least some extra time—perhaps exploring the side rooms or tunnels, waiting for injured players to recover from wounds or wasting a lot of time debating on how to escape the cave fortress—their shuttle emerges from the caves to find no sign of the *Nemesis*. This is the point at which that ship has been captured and Tareen is being interrogated. As long as they stay reasonably close to S'hanthus, the players will not be detected and can wait to see if the *Nemesis* returns. However, there is no way to get out of the system without using the jump gate, which is perilously close to the Centauri defence fleet.

If the players move towards the jump gate quickly, a Vorchan intercepts them as described under Option #1, except this time they are in an unarmed vessel. They have no choice but to surrender or be shot down. Move to Encounter Eight.

If the players wait a short period of time to see what happens, the *Nemesis* eventually reappears and moves off to the edge of the fleet. By this point the Haven's crew has been replaced by loyal Centauri and Tareen is being forced at gunpoint to sit in the captain's chair. When the players contact him, he tells them all is well and that he will rendezvous with them at once. The message then cuts off and the *Nemesis* begins moving towards S'hanthus.

The players now have two chances to realise something is going on. If someone scans the approaching Haven he will notice the recent battle damage on a Technical (space travel) check (DC 20). This check reveals that the ship has more damage than before (if it had any before). If the players try to contact Tareen to ask about this they receive only a curt reply to keep radio silence.

The other chance is to recognise that Tareen is under duress. He uses a slightly different inflection in his voice that can be noticed on a Sense Motive check (DC 26). Success means that the player in question detects only that Tareen seems worried about something. Again, if the players try to ask, they are told to keep radio silence.

If the players do not notice these slight clues or choose not to act on them, they can land safely aboard the Haven—only to be immediately surrounded by Centauri guards after they emerge from the shuttle. Proceed to Encounter Eight.

If the players want to hide from the approaching Haven they can do so by simply returning to their previous landing spot. Tareen, after all, does not know exactly where that was (remember, G'Trokk waited until the *Nemesis* moved away from S'hanthus before landing for just this very reason). If they do, Tareen is executed and another Centauri, Lieutenant Nevias, takes command. He orders the players to give themselves up or starve on their lonely rock. What happens now is up to the players—they can give up, or wait in the vain hope of rescue.

Within a few hours, however, the shuttle's position is detected and another shuttle filled with Centauri guards is sent down to capture the group. The players and their Ranger allies will have to defeat 20 Centauri soldiers in a pitched battle or simply surrender. If they retreat into the caves they face starvation. Even the Rangers among them will recognise this. Their best bet is to ambush the soldiers leaving the shuttle, and if they win they can potentially—with the right prisoners and a good plan of attack—return to the *Nemesis* to turn the tables on their would-be masters!

## Centauri Guards

### 1st Level Centauri Soldiers (4)

**Hit Points:** 8

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 12 (+2 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +2 melee or +4 ranged

**Special Qualities:** None

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +2, Will -2

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 6, Cha 12

**Skills:** Climb +4, Jump +4

**Feats:** Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (PPG)

**Equipment:** Centauri PPG, Centauri armour

These guards are typical mindless drones who obey their instructions to the letter—guard the door and sound the alarm if anyone tries to escape.

In this case the players can basically bypass Encounter Eight. Instead the players will attempt to retake the Haven, fighting at least one group of surprised guards with the stats shown in that encounter. However, midway through the attempt, the Haven will come under attack by a Narn Thentus. An announcement by the Haven's commander, Lieutenant Nevias, warns his crew of this and the players will be forced to realise that retaking the Haven just is not possible. They must return to the shuttle and try to get away before the much more powerful Narn ship defeats and destroys the *Nemesis*. Move to Encounter Nine.

## Option #3: The Players Take Their Sweet Time

If the players wasted a lot of time on S'hanthus, they will find the *Nemesis* already waiting for them above the planet when they emerge from the caves. Tareen greets them gladly as they rise to orbit and tells them to make haste, as he does not know how long he can stay here before Admiral Priya gets suspicious. By now he has been thoroughly tortured and then promised amnesty if he lures the players in—a lie, but he is grasping at straws in the face of certain execution. Detecting his worries requires a Sense Motive check (DC 31) and even then it is only a slight note of concern. This time, if the players turn about and try to duck back into the cave, the shuttle filled with guards to collect them comes much more quickly, giving them little time to prepare a defence.

Naturally, if the players press on without noticing anything is wrong, they are easily captured after emerging from the shuttle in the *Nemesis*'s hangar bay.



## Encounter Eight: Rescuer, Save Thyself

Should the players wind up captured by the Centauri—a very likely possibility—they are thrown in a ‘brig’—actually the ship’s conference room—to await questioning by Admiral Priya. Everyone is disarmed in the process and anything electronic or potentially dangerous is seized. However, the Centauri guards are not well trained in the searching of Rangers or troubleshooting teams. They may very well miss well-hidden weapons, for example. They also leave any medical supplies with the players to tend to their wounded. Food and water supplies are also left with the group.

If the Ranger leader Tinthatil survived the fighting on the planet’s surface, he mysteriously does not show up in the makeshift brig. One way or another, he manages to hide somewhere on the shuttle before anybody notices he is missing. The players will not realise this until they are left locked inside their prison, but the Ranger trainees know—as does G’Trokk. Tinthatil can thus be used as a ‘secret weapon’. However, if he did not make it through the fight with the Dark Hunter, another of the Ranger trainees can take his place in this role. Alternately G’Trokk can also take his place, as he is schooled in the arts of hiding and moving silently (Note: Should one of the players come up with this plan when capture appears inevitable and suggest it out loud, he can join Tinthatil in executing it. In this case he will participate in some of the events below. However, this is not necessary, and Tinthatil will not invite any player to do this on his own).

The players should be allowed to come up with any reasonable escape plan and put it into motion. If they have any weapons or skills that can force a locked door from the inside they can try that, but the guards outside will surely notice any such attempt unless it is very swift. The players could also try cutting their way into one of the cabins next door, if they have anything capable of slicing through solid metal. Moving through ventilation shafts is not possible because the corridors are far too small. The old standby of calling the guards for help will not work, as the soldiers outside have been instructed not to let the door open for *any* reason.

There are four guards, three of whom will attempt to subdue any escapees while the fourth sounds the alarm. Should the alarm be sounded, guards armed with energy weapons arrive from both directions down the corridor within a couple of rounds. The players may well lose this fight, in which case they will be returned to their jail and searched much more carefully this time. Furthermore, additional guards will then be posted with heavier weapons, including grenades.

In any case, as the Haven flies back towards the fleet several things happen. First Tinthatil sneaks around in the ship, locating the storeroom where the players’ equipment is stored. He then gathers up some explosives—from the players’ supply, if any, or stolen from the Centauri if not—and plants a few charges in various spots aboard the ship. Setting remote activation triggers on these, he then hurries to the brig where he intends to try to break the players out of their cell. Before he gets there, though, the *Nemesis* comes under attack by a Narn Thentus-class frigate.

When the alert sounds the ship erupts into battle stations, forcing Tinthatil to hide himself. Then when the ship starts shuddering from weapons hits he decides the time is right to blow the charges. He triggers the blasts, distracting the guards, and attacks. If the players have been listening and

### Lieutenant Nevia

5<sup>th</sup> Level Centauri Officer

**Hit Points:** 17

**Initiative:** +3 (+3 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 14 (+4 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +6 melee or +8 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Branch Specialisation (Fleet), Rallying Call

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 15

**Skills:** Bluff +8, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +6, Pilot +11, Sense Motive +4

**Feats:** Spacecraft Proficiency, Veteran Spacehand

**Equipment:** PPG rifle, Centauri officer’s uniform

Lieutenant Nevia is trying to get aboard one of the two shuttles in the bay, along with two of the other Centauri guards, so he can fly to safety. Should he succeed, he overrides the hangar bay’s door controls and opens the entire bay to space some time after the fight starts. He does not care who dies when this occurs as long as he saves his own skin. When the battle begins he and his two bodyguards are positioned opposite the Dark Hunter, so he has to wait until it moves before he can rush the shuttle. This happens on the second round when the creature moves to attack another Centauri soldier. Nevia and his bodyguards shoot on the run, aiming at the players, and rush into one of the shuttles, sealing the door behind them. On the sixth round thereafter the engines of that shuttle activate and on the twelfth round the hangar bay doors open, exposing everyone to explosive decompression.

have a way to break out, they can join him in the attack on the Centauri defenders. This time, even if they do sound the alarm there will be no response, with most of the crew gone to battle stations to help fend off the Thentus.

Tinthatil then leads the players back down the corridor to the storage room where their equipment is locked away. The players will have to hurry—if they delay too long the Haven could be destroyed in combat. Tinthatil leads them towards the shuttle bay, where the last battle of this module takes place.

## Encounter Nine: Showdown in the Shuttle Bay

*As the doors slide open you see that the shuttle bay is in chaos. Smoke is everywhere and Centauri crewmen are running about in obvious distress. Soldiers are firing wildly at nothing, which confuses you for a moment until you see the all-too-familiar demonic shape outlined by billowing vapours. As you watch in horror, the creature—an exact duplicate of the one you fought on S'hanthus—picks up a Centauri and sucks the life out of his drying husk. Before you can react to this, however, one of the panicked guards sees you standing there and opens fire!*

The final scenario is a wild melee involving 18 Centauri soldiers (use the statistics provided in Encounter Eight), the cowardly Lieutenant Nevias, the second Dark Hunter, the players, G'Trokk and any Rangers the players rescued on S'hanthus. The ultimate objective is one of the two shuttles crammed tightly on the Haven's crowded deck.

The Games Master has incredible latitude running this fight, which should be carefully tailored to the firepower and health of the surviving players. If the players are on their last legs, the Centauri in the bay will spend most of their time shooting at the terrifying creature in front of them. If instead the players are still strong, the Centauri will prefer to shoot them—a known enemy—instead of the ghostly creature rampaging about the bay. Meanwhile Lieutenant Nevias's actions put an effective time limit on the scenario, adding to the excitement.

There are several possible outcomes of this fight.

**If the players fight their way to the other shuttle**, they can escape the ship when Nevias blows the doors open. The Thentus outside pays the players no heed while it methodically cuts the Haven apart from medium range. Whoever is piloting the shuttle can easily move into the jump gate and get away, bringing the module to a successful conclusion.

**If the players retreat or are forced to leave the bay when Nevias starts opening the doors**, they will still be aboard when the *Nemesis* surrenders to the Thentus. Narn boarding the ship are met by G'Trokk, who gives a priority code and appropriates a shuttle for the players and Rangers—'victims of Centauri war crimes,' as he puts it. In a hurry to capture the *Nemesis* before Centauri forces can arrive to rescue it, the Narn do not mind letting the players—and their potentially troublesome problems—leave the area. This is also a successful conclusion to the module.

**If the players get aboard the shuttle but the Dark Hunter is still alive**, the pesky beast sneaks aboard their ship (again) and returns to Babylon 5 with them. The players can proceed to the Aftermath but will have to deal with the creature somewhere in the station's lower decks. Alternately it could slip aboard another ship bound for the rim, rejoining the growing Shadow army, and could reappear later in the campaign as a recurring enemy—especially if the players later become enemies of the Shadows. After all, the Dark Hunter is one creature that has encountered these people before and knows their strengths and weaknesses.

Note that G'Trokk and/or Tinthatil will not allow the players to flee the Haven until all the surviving Ranger trainees are brought aboard. Only if there is no way to save them will either permit them to be left behind. Tinthatil will also gladly sacrifice his own life against the Dark Hunter if doing so will permit the Ranger trainees—and to a lesser extent the players—to get away safely. G'Trokk will do the same but only if he is sure his death will have meaning.

## Aftermath

If the players end the last encounter with Tinthatil among the survivors, he will use the shuttle's communications equipment to send a message on a secret frequency. When the players then reach the *Liberty's Fortune* he insists that he and his people remain aboard the shuttle while the group departs. If asked, he reports that he has already arranged to be picked up by another group of Rangers. Sure enough, as the players are heading to the jump gate for the trip home, a mysterious, sleek ship drops out of hyperspace and collects the shuttle. The ship is graceful in appearance, with a blue tint to its silvery sheen. Anyone making a Technical (space travel) check (DC 15) can note the obvious Minbari influence on its design, but this is a ship never before seen—a White Star, of course, but the players will not know that. The White Star does not linger but heads immediately back into hyperspace and quickly vanishes.

When the players finally return to Babylon 5, they find Theresa Cross has recovered and is being kept in isolation to protect her from any other would-be assassins. Upon hearing the tale of the rescue, she is noticeably pleased and agrees to



transfer the players' fee—plus a hefty bonus if they saved a significant number of Rangers—into their credit accounts as previously agreed. She says she now hopes she and the players have earned the trust of those who would stand and face the coming darkness. Of this mysterious approaching evil, she says only that it involves an alien race known as the Shadows who intend to make war on all the other powers. First, though, they are sowing discontent and chaos to disguise the true threat. The Rangers are trying to help put a stop to that. She ends the meeting hopeful that the players will join them, if not officially then at least in spirit.

After this she departs the station aboard the *Liberty's Fortune*, promising to return. Sadly, it appears this will not be the case. A *Universe Today* article several days later reports that the civilian ship *Liberty's Fortune* was destroyed by raiders en route from Babylon 5 to Earth. The players can try to investigate, but all they learn is that the *Liberty* put out a distress call reporting attacking raiders, and later the scattered debris of the little pinnacle was discovered floating in space in that general vicinity. There were no survivors.

Yet, despite this, the players still receive their payment, transferred into their accounts by persons unknown. Anyone attempting to trace the transaction comes up empty. Whoever did it was apparently an anonymous benefactor. So are Theresa Cross and her associates dead or not? Or have they been spirited away by their new allies in the Anla'shok? Only time will tell...

### Other Possible Post-Module Events

**G'Trokk's Next Move:** After returning to Babylon 5, G'Trokk is impressed by the players' abilities and teamwork (assuming, of course, that they actually exhibited such qualities during the course of the module). However, he says that the events in Quadrant 14 have shown him that he must return to Narn space to fight alongside his people in the defence of Narn space. He now considers the players his friends and may return in future scenarios—especially after the Narn-Centauri War meets its inevitable end. For example, the players may learn that he has been captured and set out to rescue him, or he may return to Babylon 5 and ask his friends to help him with another rescue—this time of Narn attempting to escape Centauri atrocities.

**Possible Ranger Connections:** If the players did not do a very good job keeping the Ranger trainees alive, the Rangers may be less inclined to see them as heroes and allies. In this case the Rangers may well avoid the players in the future or consider them loose cannons. However, if the players acted with skill and at least some level of professionalism, they may be approached for future work by members of the Anla'shok. This could involve any number of side scenarios

which would serve not only to further the Rangers' goals but also to act as tests to see if the players are indeed worthy of undergoing induction into the Rangers.

**Ranger Training:** Should the players qualify for the Anla'shok they will need training as described in *Point of No Return*. Some players may qualify while others do not—for example, a telepath or heavily multi-classed character may not be selected. This could result in some of the players going off to training for a time while the others remain on Babylon 5. Alternately the Anla'shok may decide instead to select the entire team to be the equivalent of 'Ranger irregulars'—a group that is not exactly part of the Rangers but is acknowledged to be seeking the same goals.

### Suggested Experience for This Module

Returning safely to Babylon 5: 1,000

G'Trokk survives: 300

Tinthatil survives: 200

Tobias survives: 100

Each Dark Hunter killed: 300

The players get through the caves at maximum speed: 100

The players catch and kill R'Shon after the assassination attempt: 100

Each Ranger trainee that survives: 50 (or 500 if they all survive)

# Universe Today

**Babylon  
5 Edition  
January  
15, 2259**

## SPECIAL REPORT

### Minbari Kamikaze Attack a Colossal Bluff

**B**abylon 5 (GP)—Earlier today the citizens of Babylon 5 held their collective breaths as the rogue Minbari cruiser *Trigati* threatened to open fire on the station. The obvious question—asked only after the obligatory gasp in relief that the Minbari were bluffing—is why?

We now know there were several reasons. First and foremost, the *Trigati* went rogue because they refused to accept the Minbari surrender after the Battle of the Line. Thus, according to EarthForce General William Hague, ‘They were still fighting the Earth-Minbari War, even after all this time. Now low in supplies and unable to return to their own space, the *Trigati* planned to go out with a bang!’

Second, and perhaps more telling, the captain of the *Trigati*, Kalain, arranged his attack because he learned of the assignment of Captain John Sheridan to command Babylon 5. Captain Sheridan, one of the few heroes of the Earth-Minbari War, is best known for his destruction of the Minbari flagship *Black Star* with nuclear bombs placed in an asteroid field. Kalain apparently still held a grudge against Sheridan for that particular incident.

‘Yes, I ordered the bombs planted in the asteroids,’ Captain Sheridan stated during a postwar interview on ISN—a particularly scathing interview in which his honour was called into question. ‘Of course I did. It was war. They had already destroyed most of my task force through a deception of their own and now, even though we were crippled, they were coming back to hunt down all survivors. Think of it as somebody sinking a fleet on the ocean back in the days of the World Wars and then lurking around in a submarine to torpedo any rescue boats. That’s what the Minbari were



doing. If you were in my shoes and you knew they’d come back, you would’ve done the same thing.’

Apparently Kalain didn’t agree. He saw Sheridan’s act as the ultimate in cowardice and to punish him he set a trap at Babylon 5. We asked Susan Ivanova, acting commander of Babylon 5 prior to Sheridan’s arrival, to explain the plan. ‘He first arranged for his own death in Babylon 5’s brig,’ Ivanova explained. ‘He used poison, but the very fact that he was dead provided provocation enough to allow the *Trigati* to attack.



But even then they wouldn't take the first shot. Instead, they rushed the station with weapons ready, assuming we'd fire. We weren't fooled, though. Guess what? They weren't using those jammers of theirs. That's how we knew it was a trap. We let 'em sail right by. Meanwhile, the Captain sent a message to a Minbari cruiser waiting in hyperspace. They showed up and disabled the *Trigati*, without us having to get involved. That's when the *Trigati* blew itself up. End of story.'

Is it really the end, though? Captain Sheridan's assignment to Babylon 5 isn't exactly favourable to everyone. The Minbari aren't the only ones who question his presence here. Will he prove to be the right choice? Only time will tell.

*Further analysis of the Trigati incident: Pages A10-A11*  
*Captain Sheridan's war record: Page A8*  
*Editorial commentary: Page A14*

## COVER STORY

### New Commander Takes His Seat on B5's Command Deck

**Babylon 5 (ISN)**—Residents of Babylon 5 received a new surprise yesterday when a new commander was assigned from EarthForce: Captain John Sheridan, decorated hero of the *Black Star* Incident and veteran of the Battle of the Line.

Captain Sheridan arrived immediately as a new crisis unfolded. The Minbari warship *Trigati* (see related story, this page) attempted to trick the station's defenders into opening fire, only to be thwarted by the arrival of another Minbari ship. In the end the *Trigati* self-destructed, eliminating the threat.



'I'm glad to be here in this important post, but I would've felt much better if I hadn't started the job with such a baptism of fire,' Captain Sheridan quipped after the crisis was over.

'I just wish I would've had time to deliver my usual introductory speech,' he added with a grin.

*Please see Cover Story, next page*  
*Captain Sheridan's war record: Page A8*

### Destruction of the *Trigati* Litters Near-B5 Space with Debris

**Babylon 5 (GP)**—The recent explosion of the huge Minbari warship *Trigati*, along with the ship's entire complement of fighters, has left the space around Babylon 5 filled with chunks of dangerous, spinning debris.

Cleanup crews are already active collecting the larger pieces, but several ships have already reported collisions with sections of fuselage, canopies, armour—and even bodies.

Travellers into and out of the station are warned to fly slowly and keep the sensors busy to avoid further accidents. Some pieces of debris could enter orbit around the planet in elliptical orbits that bring them back even days after the incident.

Anyone encountering a piece of wreckage should report its position and vector to the command deck at once. Do not attempt to capture debris on your own. Some of the pieces may contain dangerous radioactivity or even war material such as explosive devices. Babylon 5's collision insurance will not pay for any accident resulting from the attempted collection of *Trigati* debris or that of its fighters.

*Photos of large debris pieces: Page A-12*

### Technorap Band Coming to B5

**San Francisco, Earth (EAN)**—The spokesman for the highly popular technorap band 'Fear of Fame and Fortune', also known as 'F-Cubed', announced today that Babylon 5 was their next stop.

F-Cubed has become known not only for its wildly jabbering but nonetheless entertaining music and singing style but also for the way the band hops randomly about the galaxy—even to places that have never heard human music before. Playing as often to wildly cheering crowds as to curious aliens that clearly don't understand what they're hearing, F-Cubed on the surface seems ill-suited as the messenger of Earth's culture to the stars. Yet they remain one of the highest paid bands in the entire Earth Alliance.

‘We’re going to Babylon 5 to reach as large a potential new audience as we can,’ explained Mortimer Pendgrass, the spokesman and agent of Fear of Fame and Fortune. ‘We’re going to set up right in the middle of their open-air restaurant area and it’s totally free. No charge at all. We’re going to rap the socks off Babylon 5!’

Mr. Pendgrass then announced the date of the concert—February 14. Security forces on Babylon 5 immediately expressed alarm, claiming that they were understaffed to protect F-Cubed before, during and after the concert. ‘One month isn’t nearly enough time to get ready for something like that,’ complained one member of Security, who asked that he not be identified by name.

‘Don’t worry,’ Pendgrass went on. ‘We’ll bring our own bouncers!’

*For more on this developing story, see the Cover Story on page D-1*

*Who is F-Cubed? Page D-2*

## Mysterious Techno-mages Spotted on Babylon 5

**Babylon 5 (ISN)**—The techno-mages, mysterious monk-like individuals who command highly advanced technologies that resemble magic, have started cropping up on Babylon 5. At least three different ones have been spotted, although the exact number isn’t clear—the mages can disguise themselves, and may even be able to appear as each other. Experts are at a loss to explain their presence here.

‘We have no idea what they’re doing on the station,’ said Security Officer Zack Allen. ‘None at all. This is the first time one has ever been positively identified on Babylon 5. These guys are weird, you know? To hear the rumours, they’re like walking demigods. I’ve never seen any of their powers, but I’ve heard the stories. We all have. So far, though, they’ve been model citizens. If you want the truth, I’m not worried about them at all—as long as no more of them show up.’

Reporters have tried to approach the techno-mages for interviews but have always been turned away. Even secret attempts to film them come up a failure—recordings are always blank, or even more mysteriously, the faces and voices of the mages are blurred or muted in the tapes.

We asked Dr. Carl Wittenberg, a professor at the Byelorussia Institute of Xenosciences, for his explanation. ‘The beings known as techno-mages are really ordinary people at heart,’

he explained in an exclusive interview. ‘They are humans, Narns, Centauri...but inside their bodies, they carry highly advanced technologies, wound in amidst their central nervous system. Using these implants, a ‘mage’ or ‘wizard’ can produce flame, manipulate electricity, create illusions... just by pointing their hand and maybe uttering the words to a ‘spell.’

‘Yes, it sounds like the subject of fiction but I assure you, the techno-mages are real. No one is sure how many of them there are, or what their real motives might be. Most seem to be wanderers, although some are known to live in specific places, where they are revered or at the very least treated as local authority figures. Curiously, although records exist to show they once interfered with governments across the galaxy—including the Centauri Republic—they don’t seem interested in such things any more. My advice? Give them a wide berth.’

For someone who can throw fire from his empty hands, this sounds like good advice indeed.

*Firsthand accounts of techno-mage encounters: Page D-3*  
*Artist’s rendition of one of the techno-mages currently visiting Babylon 5: Page D-4*

## Security Chief Garibaldi Still in Coma

**Babylon 5 (B5N)**—After the brutal attempt on his life several weeks ago, Security Chief Michael Garibaldi remains in critical condition in Medlab.

As readers of this paper know, Mr. Garibaldi was attacked by an unknown assailant while working on an important case. Security has offered a reward of 500 credits to anyone with information leading to the arrest of his attacker.

‘We are hopeful he’ll recover,’ said Dr. Stephen Franklin, ‘but as of now he’s still in a coma. I’ve done everything I can with the medical technology at my disposal. Now it’s up to him.’

As he spoke, however, Dr. Franklin seemed to remember something. ‘There may be one other way,’ he said, as if talking to himself. ‘Maybe one other way. I can’t explain right now.’

When asked for more details, Dr. Franklin said simply, ‘No comment.’

*Mr. Garibaldi’s injuries in detail: Page A-15*



# Universe Today

**Babylon  
5 Edition  
February  
26, 2259**

## Ancient Earth Ship Appears at Babylon 5

**Babylon 5 (GP)**—The *Copernicus*, an exploratory ship that launched from Earth in 2144—prior to First Contact with the Centauri—made a surprise appearance at Babylon 5 yesterday. The vessel was last seen exiting the Sol system with a crew of two, kept in suspended animation for the deep space survey mission. They were to be awakened upon detecting an intelligent signal, but despite the fact that the ship has passed through the fringes of several systems en route to Babylon 5, its occupants never awoke.

‘One of them, Mariah Cirrus, is still alive,’ explained Dr. Stephen Franklin, chief physician of Babylon 5. ‘However, she’s still recovering from the after-effects of cryogenic suspension. I’m afraid I can’t authorise any interviews just now.’

Although he wouldn’t reveal the name of the other occupant of the *Copernicus*, it’s widely rumoured that he was Mariah Cirrus’s husband. The method of death appears to be a failure of the cryogenic capsule in which he slept during the long voyage. However, a medical technician who asked not to be identified told us this wasn’t the case. ‘Whatever killed that man wasn’t a mechanical failure,’ he explained nervously. ‘He was murdered, and his internal organs were literally torn from his body.’

What could’ve done something like that wasn’t clear. The *Copernicus* had no other occupants, and its external seals hadn’t been broken prior to its arrival on Babylon 5.

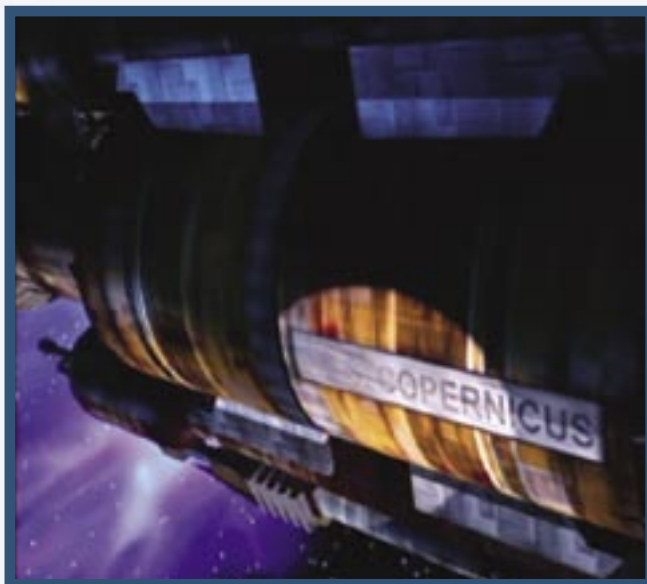
The ship is a veritable museum—a flying relic from Earth’s early space exploration days, prior to the discovery of hyperspace. Designed for flight at speeds approaching 0.2c—two-tenths of the speed of light—it literally took a hundred years to reach Epsilon Eridani. This wasn’t a direct

route, as the vessel’s flight path took it to a variety of systems. In one case, its own internal records reveal that it passed through territory already occupied by the Earth Alliance but for reasons unknown, never made contact with any outposts or ships. Most of its travel time has been spent in deep space, where few ships travel.

‘We really won’t know more about what happened to the *Copernicus* until we’ve gone over the ship’s computer logs with a fine-toothed comb,’ explained Captain Sheridan, commander of Babylon 5. ‘Hopefully they’ll shed some light on this mystery.’

*Blueprints of the Copernicus: Page A4*

*The ship’s route in pictures: Page A5*



## Another Mars Rebellion Imminent?

Mars Dome One (ISN)—Amid rumours that another Martian rebellion was approaching, stocks plummeted over 200 points on the Earth Alliance Stock Exchange (EASA) and another 100 points on the Mars Colony Stock Index (MCSI).

‘In the past week we’ve arrested half a dozen would-be saboteurs and terrorists,’ said Jacob Simmons, Assistant Chief of Mars Dome One Security. ‘Each one had unprecedented numbers of weapons and explosives in their homes. As you know, the last rebellion included weapons of all kinds apparently smuggled into the hands of rebels by persons unknown. Well, this time, we’re cutting off their supplies. Soon, we’ll track these back to whoever’s supplying these terrorists and there’ll be hell to pay!’

Despite Simmons’s confident statements, very little has actually been accomplished towards tracking the terrorists’ suppliers. ‘The problem is, they’re arranged in cells,’ explained Sharon Navarre, telepathic advisor to Mars Dome One Security. ‘I’ve scanned every one of the terrorists, in accordance with the law, which is how we captured so many. They were all supplied by an unknown agent they knew only as ‘Number One.’ Unless we have another break in the case, the only thing we’ve managed to do so far is knock out one cell of guerrilla fighters.’

Add to this the political problems surrounding Mars and the planet seems ripe for rebellion. The departure of several large companies to other colonies and to Earth have set Mars’s unemployment rate at near record highs. Meanwhile, food prices continue to rise and power companies have lowered production to increase profits. The results are rolling blackouts that have much of Mars grumbling and protesters out in droves.

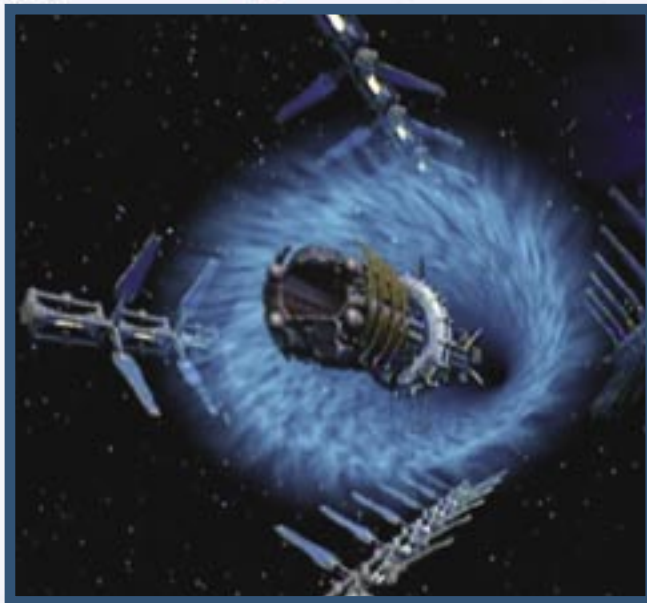
‘All we know is something has to be done, and done quickly,’ Simmons said. ‘Sooner or later, these people will reach the breaking point. I don’t know where that is, but it’s coming. When you hear your own friends and family talking about how good things were during the Earth-Minbari War, you know how far things have fallen.’

*Other Mars grievances: Page A8*

*Mars Colony’s effect on the financial situation: Cover Story, Page B1*

## Cortez Departs Without Incident... This Time

**Babylon 5 (B5P)**—This time, the departure went without a hitch. The Explorer-class survey ship *Cortez* made its second attempt to set off on its new mission, proceeding through the widened jump gate without a hitch.



Only a few days ago, the ship suffered a catastrophic reactor breakdown that set it adrift in hyperspace. Only the quick thinking of Babylon 5’s Starfury pilots, including the redoubtable Lt. Warren Keffer, brought the ship back safely—a kind of rescue that would normally have only the barest chance of success.

‘It should’ve been easier,’ Lt. Keffer explained, making no attempt to take any glory for his role in the rescue. ‘We had enough pilots and enough fighters, so all we had to do was set up a chain back to the jump gate. I’m telling you, something in hyperspace literally knocked one of the Furies out of the sky. I don’t know what it was, but I swear, I’m going to find out.’

Despite his attempt to turn the focus of the discussion away from himself, the humble Keffer was truly the hero who saved the *Cortez*. By staying cool after the destruction of his only link to Babylon 5, he provided the path home by firing his fighter’s guns in the right direction. Thus, by this simple act, he saved hundreds of men and women and one of the Earth Alliance’s largest ships from disaster.

‘We’re going to give him a medal,’ Captain Sheridan said afterward. ‘I’m not sure which, but he’s definitely getting one, I can assure you of that.’

*Explorer-class ship statistics: Page A11*

*Bio of Lt. Keffer: Page A15*



## Latest Winner of B5 Lottery Claims Ticket Stolen

**Babylon 5 (B5P)**—Tor Lashan, the Centauri who claimed the 2-million-credit jackpot in last week's B5 Lottery, now reports his ticket has been stolen.

'I should've turned it in right away,' Lashan said in disgust, 'but no, no, I had to show it off to all my friends! When I finally did take it to the lottery claims office, I found to my surprise that it was no longer in my coat pocket. I know it was there when I left my quarters. Someone must've picked my pocket! Can you imagine such a crime? And I thought the people on this station were paragons of law and order!'

Lottery officials say that even though Lashan made a copy of the winning ticket and showed it to numerous witnesses, the one who turns it in will still be awarded the money. 'It's the responsibility of the ticket buyer to ensure its security,' explained Chris Ramon, the station's lottery coordinator. 'It says so right in the rules. However, this does not mean Mr. Lashan cannot bring suit against the claimant for ownership of the ticket.'

Tor Lashan says he intends to do just that. 'In the meantime,' he went on, 'I'm offering a reward for information leading to the return of my property. Anyone who recovers it will receive 10,000 credits—which I'll hand you in cash, as soon as I turn in the ticket. As the humans say, no questions asked.'

So far, this has borne no fruit. The ticket remains at large, and the deadline for claiming the lottery prize is only a week away. Meanwhile, security guards are in place about the lottery offices, ensuring there will be no violence should anyone arrive to make the claim.

'I'll be waiting there, too,' said Lashan. 'Anyone who wants to claim the reward, you know where to find me.'

*Actual text of the lottery rules: Page A13*

*Previous similar cases in Earth Alliance history: Page A14*



## 'Blip' Found Dead in Downbelow

**Brown Five (B5P)**—The body of a man found yesterday morning has now been positively identified as that of Adolph Renfrew, a known 'blip'. Blips are telepaths who flee from Psi Corps, keeping their dangerous abilities to themselves instead of registering them within the law.

'We've been searching for Mr. Renfrew for quite some time,' said Talia Winters, Babylon 5's resident commercial telepath. 'His telepathic abilities weren't particularly powerful, but it's believed that he was using them for personal gain. He was a criminal, plain and simple. My only regret—Psi Corps's only regret—is that we couldn't bring him back into the fold. He was one of us once and would've been again, if only we could've found him before he got into such trouble. A true tragedy.'

Despite Ms. Winters's claims that Renfrew was using his abilities for 'personal gain', the man was a lurker with no appreciable assets. When found, he was dressed in rags and had no money of which to speak.

'This guy wasn't a criminal, that's for sure,' said Dr. Stephen Franklin, the station's chief medical officer and the one who performed the autopsy on Renfrew. 'Sure, he was a telepath, but it's clear he kept his abilities to himself. If he wanted to, he could've found a way to at least get some quarters and a little money. Instead, he died penniless, on the run, trying to hide from those he considered his oppressors. His death was a tragedy, indeed. Yes. A tragedy.'

Adolph Renfrew was the third dead blip to turn up on Babylon 5 in the last six months, a remarkable number considering the rarity of telepaths and the even greater scarcity of blips. Psi Corps estimates that perhaps no more than twenty or thirty blips exist at any given moment.

Anyone who encounters a blip should not attempt to interact with him or her in any way. Blips can be very subtle and dangerous. Instead, contact your local Psi Corps representatives with all due haste.

'Blips aren't to be taken lightly,' explained Talia Winters. 'They can be quite desperate and if you want my opinion, few things are more dangerous than a desperate telepath.'

*Analysis of the crime scene: Page A2*

# Universe Today

**Babylon  
5 Edition  
May 2,  
2259**

## **SPECIAL REPORT — WAR!** **Narn Regime and Centauri Republic Declare War Over Quadrant 14**

**B**abylon 5 (ISN)—At 1630 today, the ambassadors made it official: The Narns and Centauri are at war.

The bubbling pool of rising tensions has finally boiled over. Early today, a Centauri force of unknown size attacked and annihilated the Narn colony in Quadrant 14, resulting in the loss of at least 10,000 dead. Narn forces arriving on the scene beheld untold devastation and immediately fell upon the Centauri fleet. The battle still appears to be raging, but at press time, the Narns were falling back in the face of arriving Centauri reinforcements.

All this comes on the same day the Centauri Emperor, Turhan, made a historic visit to Babylon 5, during which it was hoped he would patch things up with the Narn Regime. Sources have learned that such an attempt was indeed made, but it came too late. Centauri forces were already on the move.

Shortly before Emperor Turhan's death, sources at ISN learned that the Centauri Prime Minister was assassinated on Centauri Prime. Details are sketchy and the name of the Emperor's successor is not yet known. However, the timing of all these events seems curious.

'Emperor Turhan's death was by natural causes, I can assure you of that,' said Dr. Stephen Franklin, who took care of the dying man in his final hours. 'He was just old and his body finally failed him. There were no toxins in his system and no foul play was at work.'

The timing of events has led many experts to declare that certain individuals were merely waiting for the Emperor's

failing health to overtake him. 'It's clear that his death was the trigger for a kind of chain reaction,' said Sir Victor Richards, the Earth Alliance Foreign Minister and well-known expert on alien governments. 'The beginning of the war was precisely timed with the death of the Prime Minister. Clearly, one of the Major Houses is making a power play, hoping to tie the Republic up in a popular war while they increase their power.'

Meanwhile, Narn forces all over the galaxy are marshalling for a war that seemed to take both sides by surprise.

'Clearly neither race is prepared for all-out war,' said Dr. Alicia Lindstrom of the Earth Alliance Foreign Affairs office. 'If they were, the Centauri would be pouring over the border with vast armadas. They aren't. The Narns are just as bad. Their fleets are scattered through their space. If





you were prepping for an invasion, wouldn't you place your forces at the points of attack, or at least along the border to offset counterstrikes? No, this took both sides by surprise. You can count on that.'

Lindstrom is on Sir Richards's staff, but frequently disagrees with him. Richards declined to respond to her observations.

Regardless of the reason for the sudden attack and who was or was not prepared, war is upon these two great powers. Now the galaxy can only hold its breath and wait to see which side is the victor.

*Please see the Cover Story continuing on the next page*

*Quadrant 14—analysis of the attack: Page A3*

*Comparison of Narn and Centauri military forces: Page A4*

*The Primus vs. the G'Quan—a comparison of two battlecruisers: Page A5*

*Economics or Military? Great wars through history: Page A6*

## Centauri Emperor Dies During Visit to Babylon 5

**Babylon 5 (B5P)**—Despite failing health, Emperor Turhan felt a state visit to Babylon 5 was important enough to risk his own life. His gamble failed.

'The Emperor was dying of old age,' said Ambassador Mollari, the Centauri ambassador to Babylon 5. 'Many of us urged him not to come, but he said he had to try. No one is sure what he meant by that. Perhaps his message was to personally deliver the declaration of war to the Narn ambassador, but if so, he was unable to do so before the fighting began.'



'That's crazy,' insisted Captain Sheridan, commander of Babylon 5. 'Leaders of vast nations don't risk themselves to deliver declarations of war. That's what ambassadors are for. He came here for another reason—but I don't think anyone will ever know for sure what it was.'

Speculation is that the Emperor came to Babylon 5 to attempt to make peace with the Narn Regime. If so, he perished before he could make the attempt. In any event, this seems unlikely. Ships of the Centauri Republic were already on the move before Turhan even arrived at the station. The trip to Quadrant 14 from their nearest staging base would've taken at least a day.

'Emperor Turhan died of natural causes,' said Dr. Franklin, who examined the Centauri leader both before and after his death. 'There was no evidence of foul play.'

Shortly after the Emperor's death, a Narn colony was destroyed in Quadrant 14 and the Narns declared war on the Centauri.

*See Complete War Coverage throughout Section A*

## Akdor Erupts Into Civil War

**Akdor, Sh'lassan Empire (ISN)**—Barely noticed in today's tumultuous events involving the Narn and Centauri, the planet Akdor in the Sh'lassan Empire flared into open revolt yesterday. The announcement came scant hours before the destruction of the Narn colony in Quadrant 14. Very little is known of the cause of the rebellion.

'Akdor has been the primary colony of the Sh'lassan Empire for two hundred years,' said Ambassador Quat'shata, speaking from his quarters in the Alien Sector of Babylon 5. 'We have always treated the colonists with the utmost respect and kindness. Yet this is how they repay us! Attacking our police, destroying public works...they will be punished for this, I assure you!'

ISN reporters also spoke to one of the rebels on Akdor, who declined to be named, believing that doing so would threaten his life. He appeared nervous as he spoke to us, constantly swivelling his head back and forth. 'The homeworld has treated Akdor as a slave world for dozens of your years. We are the lowest caste of citizens in the Sh'lassan Triumvirate. Pah! As if that word truly described our status, as though we were equals. Sh'lassan Slavocracy is more likely!'

'That is nonsense,' said Quat'shata. 'Absolutely false. They are not slaves. Akdorrian citizens have the same rights as those on Sh'lassa or Hishor. We give them what they need—food, fuel, better standard of living—and they

repay us with greater and greater demands! They would live like kings in their protected domes while the rest of the Empire serves their whims. No longer!’

Although the beginning of the Narn-Centauri conflict has most Earth Alliance delegates focusing on that matter, some did express concern over the Akdor revolt. ‘The Sh’lassans are a favoured trading partner of Earth,’ said Jorge Tossada, a member of President Clark’s foreign ministry. ‘Additionally, Akdor is directly on the Alliance’s primary trade route to the Narn homeworld. We already have a defence agreement with the Sh’lassans and there are troops present in both their systems. As yet, our garrison on Akdor hasn’t come under attack, but if our troops are threatened, we’ll have to defend ourselves. Furthermore, if the Sh’lassans ask for our help in suppressing the revolt, I can’t see how we could possibly refuse them.’

‘Think of it this way,’ said Quat’shada pointedly. ‘You humans have already suppressed open revolts on one of your major colonies—Mars, is it not? This is the same to us, although Akdor’s population and industry are far higher than those on Mars. We have no choice but to bring these rebels back into line. I hope we can count on aid from our like-minded friends in the Earth Alliance in this matter.’

This statement provoked a storm of criticism from the Martian senatorial staff in Geneva, but has so far been overshadowed by the Narn-Centauri War. ‘No one seems to want to bother with Akdor at the moment,’ said Tossada with a noticeable shrug. ‘Sooner or later, though, it’s bound to come up and when it does...’

He left the statement unfinished, but the meaning is clear: The Marines will be called in.

*Akdor’s history: Page A10*

*Who are the Sh’lassans? Page A11*

## Unidentified ‘Floater’ Brought to Babylon 5

**Medlab, Blue Sector (B5N)**—A freighter bound for Earth space dropped off an unusual cargo today—a ‘floater’ or lifepod containing a survivor in suspended animation. The

pod was discovered and picked up in the Comac system several days ago. Inside, an unidentified man in a Belt Alliance uniform was still alive, held in suspension by the pod’s automatic systems.

‘He could’ve been out there for years,’ said Security Chief Michael Garibaldi. ‘Pods like that are designed to broadcast a distress signal to any ship that comes close enough. We don’t even know what ship he was from, since this one took so much damage while it drifted. Anyone who recognises the man shown in the image (*see picture, page A16*) should contact Security immediately.’

According to Dr. Stephen Franklin, the medical officer who brought the man safely back to consciousness after his ordeal, the ‘John Doe’ has an acute case of amnesia. ‘He doesn’t remember anything, not even his own name,’ the doctor explained. ‘That’s not uncommon in situations where suspension lasts for long periods, but it usually fades within a few hours. His seems to be lingering. That’s why we need anyone who recognises his image to contact us at once.’

‘We’re pretty sure he was a Belt Alliance crewman, but we don’t know when or where he might’ve lost his ship. I wish I had more time to look into this, but with all the wars going on, I’m terribly busy just getting Medlab ready for what are sure to be plenty of casualties in the next few weeks.’

‘If we can’t find out who he is and he doesn’t recover from his memory loss, I’ll have no choice but to release him,’ said Dr. Franklin sadly. ‘That would be a tragedy. For all we know, this man could shed some light on the mystery of one of the Belt Alliance ships that’s gone missing in that area in the last dozen years or so. He could even be a hero and not realise it.’

The man, known only as ‘John Doe’, was unavailable for comment.

*Listing of Belt Alliance losses in or near Brakiri space in the last 20 years: Page A15*



# Universe Today

**Babylon  
5 Edition  
October  
24, 2259**

## Markab Race Virtually Annihilated By Plague

**M**arkab Space (ISN)—Reports coming in throughout Markab space indicate that the Markab race has been all but destroyed by what is now known as the ‘Drafa plague’.

Every Markab planet and colony has been devastated by the disease, which has a nearly 100% fatality rate. The spread of the plague was accelerated by the mistaken belief among the Markab culture that those who came down with symptoms were ‘cursed’ by the gods and were struck down as unworthy or immoral. The righteous, or so they anticipated, would be left unharmed by the disease.

Sadly, this proved not to be the case. Markabs of all ages, even innocent children, were slain by the Drafa organism, which was apparently an airborne virus of extreme communicability.

‘The Drafa plague has an incubation period of about a week,’ explained Dr. Stephen Franklin, Babylon 5’s chief medical officer. ‘It’s all but impossible to detect during that time. After that, symptoms develop quickly and include dizziness, nausea, weakness and finally an almost inevitable death. Every single Markab on Babylon 5 perished from this disease, a 100% casualty rate. Even those who kept apart from the others, staying out of the isolation zone, contracted it through airborne vectors.’

Dr. Franklin then compared the plague to that of the Black Death of Earth’s Dark Ages. ‘The Black Death was spread by the fleas that infested rats,’ he explained, looking weary from what has been at least two days without sleep. ‘Yet the people in the areas struck by this disease considered it ‘immoral,’ brought by the Devil. Cats were considered the ‘familiars’ of Satan and therefore the people mindlessly

believed that killing every cat they found would stop the spread of the disease. Instead, they only allowed the rat population to explode, creating an epidemic of immense proportions.’

‘The same thing happened here, basically. Even at the end, the Markab government wouldn’t research the plague. I was actually able to find a cure working almost entirely on my own, alongside a brave Markab friend named Lazarenn—may he rest in peace. If only they hadn’t clung to this belief that it was an immoral curse! We could’ve saved at least some of them!’

During the Drafa plague’s course on Babylon 5, a Pak’mara fell victim to the disease. Dr. Franklin eventually identified a similar physiological structure in the Pak’mara body that’s subject to the plague’s effects. ‘They [the Pak’mara] have a



kind of 'green cell' that produce chemicals that aid the neural relays in the body's nervous system,' he explained, pointing at a medical scan (*see illustration, page A2*). 'The Markabs have a 'yellow cell' that does much the same thing, only is far more critical to their health. With the yellow cells disrupted, a Markab victim's neurons literally couldn't communicate with each other, causing the body to simply fail to work. Fortunately, most races—including humans, Narns, Centauri and Minbari—don't use similar cells, so they aren't in any danger. The Pak'ma'ra who died was unusually susceptible due to a genetic disorder. I don't believe the other Pak'ma'ra on Babylon 5 are at risk, but even so, I've ordered them all vaccinated against the plague.'

The appearance of the Drafa plague came as a surprise to the Markab race. 'Drafa was last seen decades ago on the Markab homeworld, in an isolated religious retreat,' said Dr. Franklin. 'That's what Lazarenn told me. The whole area was later sterilised, since it was believed that those victims were struck down by the gods. How the disease resurfaced years later is a complete mystery.'

*Technical analysis of the plague organism: Page A2*  
*Markab space declared off-limits to travellers: Page A3*

## Volunteers Needed to Locate Possible Markab Survivors

**Babylon 5, Blue Sector (B5P)**—With the Drafa plague still out there, a call has been put forth to locate potential Markab survivors on isolated outposts.

'The Markabs were a very religious people,' explained Captain John Sheridan, commander of Babylon 5, in an exclusive interview. 'They believed the beauty of the universe was a blessing from their gods. In some ways, I almost agree with them. To celebrate this belief, they constructed small bases known as 'shrines' around nebulae, exploding stars and things like that. Not just in their space, either. Anywhere in the galaxy they possibly could. We don't even know for sure how many of these shrines are out there.'

'In any case, what we need are some intrepid explorers to go out to the known shrines and deliver the cure for the plague. If any Markab survivors are still out there, we owe it to them to give them a chance to survive and potentially rebuild their race.'

Anyone who wants to take part in this humanitarian operation should see

Dr. Stephen Franklin in Medlab One. Access to your own spacecraft is required.

## Narn Admiral G'Tal Defeated at Jux Prime

**Centauri Prime (ISN)**—G'Tal, early hero of the Narn-Centauri War, was defeated yesterday after being cut off and surrounded in the Jux Prime system, according to Centauri sources.

G'Tal, who took a war fleet all the way to Marigol, a major system in the far corner of Centauri space, destroying the starbase there, had been on the defensive for weeks following the failure of his troop ships to conquer Marigol. According to Centauri insiders, reinforcements were not forthcoming because the Drazi declared their borders closed to Narn reinforcements, leaving G'Tal cut off behind Centauri lines.

Despite this, G'Tal had managed to conquer Jux Prime, Quadrant 8, Quadrant 32 and nearly Marigol before arriving. Centauri forces halted his ill-fated invasion of the latter system. The only ships arriving to reinforce his battle-weary squadrons were a few Corillani co-belligerents. This small nation, once a Centauri subject race, is the only non-aligned power to ally itself with the Narn Regime in the war.

Nine days ago, after the Marigol defeat, G'Tal retreated to Quadrant 8, but then, instead of moving to the more heavily populated Jux Prime, where he might at least expect reinforcements, he moved to Quadrant 32 instead. Experts believe he may have anticipated either aid from the Antareans or possibly reinforcements, as that race was also considering joining the war. The faltering Narn invasion of





Centaury space, however, apparently forced the Antareans into neutrality and they closed their borders to G'Tal. Thus, by the time he could move to Jux Prime, the Centaury fleet was already there.

Upon dropping out of hyperspace, G'Tal found his war-weary forces surrounded and had no choice but to surrender or face destruction. Low on fuel and supplies, he surrendered his flag at 2130 hours yesterday, according to Centaury news sources.

G'Tal now faces a war crimes tribunal for atrocities supposedly committed at Marigol and Jux Prime. 'There were no atrocities,' said Narn Ambassador G'Kar firmly, in a prepared statement today on Babylon 5. 'G'Tal used no weapons of mass destruction and no slaughter of civilians took place as the Centaury claim. He should be afforded all the rights of a prisoner of war, not hauled away as a common criminal! This is war and soldiers fight in wars! To say otherwise is to suggest a policy of genocide against all Narns!'

Ambassador Mollari of the Centaury Republic had no comment, except to state that the trial would continue as scheduled.

*Full-fledged Narn-Centaury war coverage: Pages A4-A9*

## Alien Creature Found Lurking in Grey Sector May Be New Type of Lifeform

**Medlab, Blue Sector (B5P)**—An alien 'creature of thought' that infested the mind of Babylon 5's own Captain John Sheridan recently is believed to have been a totally new form of life unknown to science.

'At first, we weren't sure what was happening to him,' explained Dr. Stephen Franklin. 'All we knew for sure was that he was having hallucinations, essentially reliving events of his life that were particularly stressful. I thought it might be a virus at the time, but nothing seemed wrong with him at all.'

The creature was set free three days ago by returning it to Sector 14, the mysterious and restricted area of space where Babylon 4 mysteriously reappeared—and then disappeared—last year.

'My current theory is that this was a kind of creature native to another universe entirely,' said Dr. Franklin in complete seriousness. 'A Markab ship passed through Sector 14 several days before the Drafa plague hit and apparently picked up this hitchhiker by mistake. All the poor thing wanted was to be returned home. When Captain Sheridan took it back there, it left his body and re-entered its home universe through the weakened fabric of space. All the more reason not to go back there—and yet, I can't help but wonder

what sort of things these creatures could teach us, if we could only learn to communicate with them.'

Be that as it may, Captain Sheridan isn't authorising any new trips to Sector 14 in the near future. 'That area of space is still restricted,' he said with a knowing smile. 'After all, the creature drove its first host mad and was on its way to doing the same thing to me. My advice is stay away from that area if you value your sanity.'

*Speculation about the creature's origins and physical structure: Page A8*

## Halloween Week Arrives on Babylon 5

**Babylon 5 (B5P)**—Once again, the annual human tradition of Halloween Week is upon us. Humans of all ages, but children in particular, will be seen dressed in bizarre costumes throughout the coming days, leading up to the grand celebration on October 31.

Halloween is a difficult holiday to explain to non-humans. Its origins are lost in antiquity, combining elements from several different religious celebrations (*for a detailed explanation, see the essay on page D5*). In its modern incarnation, parties are held throughout the week while those who participate wear outlandish outfits from Earth's history and mythology. Male and female partners often wear matching costumes, such as Samson and Delilah, for example. Non-humans are warned not to be alarmed by the bizarre clothing that will be seen over the next few days.

As usual, the following costumes are not allowed: Anything with real or simulated weapons (not just firearms, but swords and other antiques), any modern military uniforms (especially Babylon 5 Security or Command attire), replicas of non-human aliens that could confuse visitors, or anything known to be dangerous or that could cause a panic. When in doubt, contact Security with a description or sample of your costume to ensure that no trouble will result. Failure to do so may result in arrest or confiscation of the offending clothing or accoutrements.

Note that these restrictions apply only to individuals travelling in public areas of Babylon 5. Those attending private parties can wear what they like, so long as it is within Babylon 5's normal laws. The wearing of weapons is still expressly prohibited without a permit, of course.

Note also that a good number of costumes involve feigned injury or death, such fake axes in the head, or individuals made up to look like zombies. The Pak'ma'ra are advised to verify that all corpses are, in fact, dead before making any attempt at consumption.

*Halloween throughout history: Page D5*

*Locations of costume shops on Babylon 5: Page D6*

# Appendix B:

## Important

## Non-Player

## Character

## Statistics

### Alison Fernandez

5<sup>th</sup> Level Human Diplomat

**Hit Points:** 11

**Initiative:** +0 (+0 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 11 (+1 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +1/-4 melee or +2/-3 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Contact (Theresa Cross), Contact (Ian McLeary), Contact (Games Master's choice), Improved Diplomacy

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 8, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16

**Skills:** Appraise +6, Bluff +8, Computer Use +7, Diplomacy +17, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (History) +3, Knowledge (Law) +3, Knowledge (Star Systems) +5, Listen +6, Sense Motive +9, Speak Language (Centauri), Speak Language (Spanish)

**Feats:** Iron Will, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Weapon Proficiency (Melee)

**Standard Equipment:** PPG, hand communicator

Alison has held many jobs in her life, but the one she is most fond of is her stint as an aide to Ambassador Sullivan of the Earth Alliance during the post-Minbari War reparation discussions. She discovered then that she had a real flair for diplomacy, but unfortunately in her early days she was not quite as good at it as she is now. In her attempts to please everyone she made a few enemies and one of these (she is not quite sure which) arranged to have her accused of taking bribes. IPX, however, saw her potential value and gave her a job on Babylon 5.

Alison is quite comely and may well attract the eye of one or more male human characters in the group. She will wait first to see if any of them make a move, but if not, she will

approach one (the most attractive one who has no other attachments) and arrange a date. This could lead to a couple of side scenarios later in the story arc, including one in which she could learn who set up the false accusations that ruined her original career—and why they did it.

Alison is from Buenos Aires but speaks English like someone from the American Midwest. She also speaks Spanish fluently, though she considers it her second language. When she becomes highly emotional (or in the heat of passion) she will interject Spanish words or phrases into her speech patterns (e.g., *Madre de Dios!*).

After Module Three, Alison advances to 6<sup>th</sup> Level Diplomat, earning Government Resources as a special ability. This increase brings with it one hit point, +1 to all saving throws, +1 base attack, +1 to each of seven different skills (Games Master's choice) and the Adaptable feat (see *The Earth Alliance Fact Book*).

### Caitlin Schulz

3<sup>rd</sup> Level Human Agent

**Hit Points:** 10

**Initiative:** +0 (+0 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 16 (+6 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +2 melee or +5 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Security Systems, Sneak Attack +1d6

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 13

**Skills:** Balance +9, Computer Use +7, Concentration +6, Drive +9, Escape Artist +9, Pilot +12, Speak Language (German), Spot +8, Technical (space travel) +7

**Feats:** Skill Focus (Pilot), Spacecraft Proficiency, Veteran Spacehand

**Standard Equipment:** PPG, hand communicator

Caitlin is German, although the accent is barely noticeable. She was recruited by Theresa Cross as her personal pilot and is intimately familiar with the *Liberty's Fortune*. She was born in Frankfurt but grew up in Geneva, a city she is very familiar with. She also knows the story of Rasheed Isanda's betrayal during *The Fiery Trial* and is initially worried about meeting the players, expecting them to distrust her because of her predecessor's actions. Thus she acts cautious and guarded at first, but eventually opens up and becomes friendly. Unlike Rasheed, she will not betray anyone and although she normally stays with the ship, she can become an invaluable ally in several of the modules herein.



## G'Trokk

4<sup>th</sup> Level Narn Officer

**Hit Points:** 17

**Initiative:** +3 (+3 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 14 (+4 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +7 melee or +7 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Covering Fire, DR 3 (armour)

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 17, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 11

**Skills:** Computer Use +8, Pilot +10, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7

**Feats:** Nerves of Steel, Spacecraft Proficiency, Weapon Focus (PPG)

**Equipment:** PPG Model 10, Narn battle armour

G'Trokk is large and burly, even for a Narn. His head is wide and his nose is flat. He wears his battle armour constantly, even while sleeping, as though it were a second skin. He spends a great deal of time planning for his latest mission, exercising constantly to make sure his body will not fail him when the time finally comes to act.

G'Trokk is well-known to the Rangers and a valuable ally, although he is not himself a Ranger. It is he who arranged for them to move into their secret training facility in Quadrant 14, where he made regular visits while stationed on the nearby base. He was away from the facility on a trip to Homeworld when the Shadow attack came, destroying the entire Narn colony but leaving the Ranger facility unaffected since it was on a different planet and hidden deep underground. He has since made two attempts to return to Quadrant 14 but each has failed. Now he has a ship as well as allies and is confident he can rescue his 'family'—the Rangers trapped behind Centauri lines.

## Theresa Cross

9<sup>th</sup> Level Human Agent

**Hit Points:** 21

**Initiative:** +2 (+2 Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

**DV:** 18 (+8 Reflex)

**Attacks:** +5/+0 melee or +8/+3 ranged

**Special Qualities:** Security Systems, Sneak Attack +2d6, Skill Mastery (Bluff, Concentration, Intimidate, Listen)

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +8

**Abilities:** Str 9, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 16

**Skills:** Bluff +17, Computer Use +16, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +17, Gather Information +15, Intimidate +15,

Listen +14, Search +16, Speak Language (Drazi, Minbari, Narn), Spot +14, Technical (electronic) +16

**Feats:** Driven (see Appendix C), Independently Wealthy, Iron Will, Manipulative (see Appendix C), Resist Scan

**Standard Equipment:** PPG, hand communicator

Theresa Cross is an agent of IPX much as Roland Anderson was, but she has become disillusioned by things going on behind closed doors in her company. She suspects that someone else is now pulling the strings and is not very happy about the idea. As the campaign begins she keeps these thoughts to herself, but eventually she learns that all her fears are true. After this she tells Alison the truth about her own background and begins a secret war against IPX and the forces of President Clark.

Theresa dresses plainly and tries very hard not to be noticed. She wears dark, uninteresting clothing and speaks without any recognisable accent. A Listen check (DC 20) will note that she occasionally slips briefly into one accent and then another and another, as if unable to decide what country she is actually from. Whether this is by accident or design cannot be determined.

Theresa is a thin rail of a woman who only weighs about 100 pounds. She prefers heavy coats or outfits with shoulder padding to suggest she is not so frail. She rarely smiles and tends to speak in a cool, businesslike manner. If anyone makes a joke she laughs along with the others, but it is a clipped, harsh sound that is clearly forced. Humour, it seems, is not an important part of her life. The only time she shows any true emotion is when describing a potential job or trying to convince others to do what she needs them to do. Then she becomes animated, appealing to them in whatever way she must to get them to accept the task she sets before them.

Theresa will not gain any levels over the course of the campaign.

# Appendix C: New Characteristics

This section includes a variety of new character rules either used in this book or inspired by its pages. Use of this material is subject to approval by the Games Master.

## New Prestige Classes

### The Empath

While telepaths work with the power of thought, empaths focus on the power of emotion. They can read the feelings of others and manipulate them to a certain degree. Doing this uses many of the same rules that telepath characters employ.

True empaths are extremely rare. Although some P1 and P2 telepaths have some weak empathic abilities, these fade quickly at higher P-levels. Most empaths simply get 'gut feelings' about others or seem unusually likeable or charismatic. Psi Corps has undertaken some experimentation to boost empathic powers but has found that such improvements result in a weakening and eventual loss of all telepathic abilities. Thus they are reluctant to employ such methods except in rare cases. Telepathic powers are considered far more useful and effective than empathic ones. Still, a few do exist—the results of early experimentation or volunteers agreeing to undertake the procedure for reasons that remain unknown.

Although it is theoretically possible to be a true empath, virtually all existing ones of any strength whatsoever are conversions from ordinary telepaths. This is the result of experimentation conducted by Psi Corps or another similar organisation. Any race that employs telepaths can theoretically use empaths as well.

To qualify to become an empath a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

**Abilities:** Charisma 12+, P-Rating 8 or greater.

**Skills:** Concentration 8 ranks, Diplomacy 8 ranks, Sense Motive 8 ranks, Telepathy 8 ranks.

**Feats:** None. Note that the telepath will lose the use of any telepath feats in any case, so this is not a particularly big deal.

**Special:** The empath must undertake a special, dangerous procedure that permanently removes all his telepathic abilities. This procedure is not generally given out to anyone

who asks—Psi Corps (or whatever organisation employs it) will only do so for good reason. Usually this is to create a special agent or other operative, although other reasons might also be available.

### Class Skills

The empath's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Technical (Int), and Telepathy (Cha).

**Skill Points Per Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

All of the following are class features of the empath prestige class.

**Hit Points Per Level:** 1.

**Non-Telepath:** Although the character may have once possessed telepathic powers, these are all stripped by the procedure that makes him an empath. However, the character keeps his ranks in the Telepathy skill and continues to advance that skill, employing it for his empathic abilities as though they were telepathic abilities. Because an empath is not a true telepath, psi-blocking drugs will not restrict his abilities.

**Empathy:** Beginning at 1<sup>st</sup> level, an empath can sense emotions in all those around him, reaching out to a range of 30 feet. This ability extends in all directions, even those the character is not currently looking. However, it does not penetrate metal at all and cannot reach through more than two inches of concrete or stone or four inches of dirt or earth. Thus, under most circumstances, this ability cannot be used simply to detect the presence of other creatures on the side of a wall.

Most of the time, the empath is only aware of emotions on a subtle level, in the same way he is aware of conversations going on in a crowded room as he passes by—he does not actually hear the words unless he tunes in directly. It is the same with empathy. An empath normally shrugs off anything other than powerful or suspicious emotions unless he is actively concentrating on someone. Concentrating is a standard action and reveals the precise emotional state of the target. This ability cannot be blocked, although a telepath receives a Will save (DC 10 + the scanner's empath and telepath levels + the empath's Charisma bonus) to resist. A mind shield will help for this purpose. If the save succeeds the empath detects nothing, but the telepath is unaware that an attempt was made to read his emotions.



Empathy functions whether the character wants it to or not. However, the character learns to live with such things as a matter of course, retreating to a private room if he wishes to be free of foreign feelings. Some aliens, especially those with radically different physiologies, can cause distinct discomfort. Empathy has no effect on Vorlons or Shadows.

**Likeable:** The empath's powers are constantly at work on others, improving the character's Charisma automatically. He receives a +1 enhancement bonus to his Charisma for every two empath levels. This bonus applies only against those within 30 feet as described previously—it does not apply over electronic communications, for example. As has been said before, people just want to like an empath.

**Project Emotions:** Beginning at 2<sup>nd</sup> level, an empath learns to project desired emotions onto any subject. At 2<sup>nd</sup> level and each level thereafter, he can select one ability from the list below. He can project any known emotion as a standard action against any target within 30 feet as described previously. Using one of these powers requires concentration to maintain, but he can keep it going as long as he wishes and as long as the target remains in range. Projecting an emotion requires a Telepathy check at the indicated DC and inflicts one point of nonlethal damage on the empath. Note that some emotions have prerequisites listed in parentheses;

an empath must know all prerequisites before he can learn the listed power.

All targets of emotional projection receive a Will save (DC 10 + the empath's telepath and empath levels + the empath's Charisma bonus) to resist the effects. A mind shield helps defend against this effect but no other means of defence will block it, including helmets and other items used to reduce the strength of telepathic powers.

*Anger (DC 17):* The target becomes angered and upset. Anything—any insult or threat, or even a poorly timed joke, can set him off. Generally this will result in a bare-knuckles brawl, although someone with a weapon might draw it and attack. If no threat appears, the target simply seethes for as long as the power is maintained.

*Anxiety (DC 24, Prerequisites: Fear and Disgust):* The target becomes nervous, agitated and sick to his stomach as though consumed with worry. He is treated as both shaken and nauseated, and if he fails his save by five or more he becomes physically unable to do anything except stand there trembling.

*Directed Anger (DC 20, Prerequisite: Anger):* The target becomes angry at another subject whom the empath subtly indicates, either by voice or body language. The new subject does not have to be within range of the empath's powers. At a further suggestion by the empath or the slightest provocation, the target attacks the indicated subject. During the resulting fight the empath can simply walk away, allowing the battle to rage on unabated. The effects of this particular power persist for as long as the battle continues.

*Directed Hatred (DC 21, Prerequisite: Hatred):* Like directed anger, this ability allows the empath to cause the target to hate someone else, even someone out of range or not even visible (such as an image on a holo). The empath can then make suggestions or hints that fuel the hatred and can even give the target a method or means to undertake 'revenge'. Since the empathic power only lasts as long as the target is within



## The Empath

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Empathy
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Likeable +1, Project Emotions
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	Likeable +2
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Extended Emotion (1)
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	Likeable +3
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	Extended Emotion (2)
8	+6/+1	+2	+2	+6	Likeable +4
9	+6/+1	+3	+3	+6	Extended Emotion (3)
10	+7/+2	+3	+3	+7	Likeable +5

range, it is not very useful for convincing someone to attempt a long-term campaign. Also, unless the target is already unstable, he will not try to commit murder. However, he could be incited to take some other action such as embarrassing the target or robbing him.

*Disgust (DC 17):* The target becomes ill and is treated as nauseated. If he fails his save by five or more he is sickened instead.

*Fear (DC 17):* The target becomes afraid. If he fails his save he is shaken. If he fails by five or more he is frightened and runs away, or if there is nowhere to run he cowers instead.

*Friendship (DC 20, Prerequisite: Like):* The target decides he likes the empath and considers him on the level of a good friend. The target refuses to attack the empath, even if already engaged in combat with him when the power is invoked. Furthermore the target will do whatever he can to help the empath in the current situation short of undertaking violence on his behalf.

*Hatred (DC 18):* The target is consumed with hatred of the empath, believing he is the lowest scum there is. Depending upon the target's character this could have a variety of results. He might spit in the empath's face, for example, or slap him. More than likely, however, he will simply retreat from the area to get away from the empath's hated presence.

*Like (DC 17):* The target decides he likes the empath and wants to believe whatever the empath tells him. This gives the empath a +10 circumstance bonus on Bluff or Diplomacy checks against that individual and may have other effects. If the target enters combat or is already fighting when this power is invoked, he receives a -2 morale penalty on attack rolls against the empath.

*Love (DC 25, Prerequisite: Friendship):* The target believes he or she loves the empath, either romantically (for those of the opposite sex or orientation) or like a brother or sister. In addition to the effects of friendship, the target sees the empath as someone to be cherished and protected. If someone else attacks the empath, the target protects him in whatever way he can. An empath will not use this ability often because afterwards the subject realises that something strange must have happened to him to make him feel that way. Most empaths do not want to have their powers revealed to mundanes.

*Sadness (DC 18):* The target is consumed with sadness, perhaps even weeping openly. He receives a -2 penalty to all attack rolls, ability checks and skill checks and may take other actions depending on his nature (such as reaching for a strong drink). If he fails the save by five or more he breaks down and cries, unable to take any actions at all.

**Extended Emotion:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level an empath can maintain a projected emotion against a target even if the target is out of the normal range or behind a barrier. An empath must first invoke the emotion in the normal manner within the normal parameters. An empath can maintain more than one power at longer ranges at 5<sup>th</sup> level, two powers at 7<sup>th</sup> level and three powers at 9<sup>th</sup> level. When the subject moves out of normal range the empath must make a second Telepathy check to hold the power, at a DC five points higher than the listed value. Success indicates he maintains the ability, while failure causes it to drop. In either case he takes one additional point of nonlethal damage. An ability may be maintained at range for no more than 15 minutes before the empath must try another Telepathy check and pay one more point of nonlethal damage. Lost nonlethal damage cannot be recovered while an extended emotion is maintained.



## New Feats

The following feats are available specifically to members of the Dilgar race. As an option, a Games Master may allow these feats to be purchased by members of other races whose background permit similar abilities.

### Act of Desperation

When the going gets tough, you can call on an inner reserve that few can match. Whenever a situation becomes desperate, you can choose to forge ahead through sheer force of will. Once per day you can call upon this ability to change any one die roll your character has just made. You must make this decision immediately after the results of the roll, before anyone else takes their action, and you may not alter die rolls made by others. When this ability is invoked you basically alter the die roll to any number you choose. If this results in additional rolls (e.g., if you use the roll to change an attack roll to a 20, thereby threatening a critical hit), those rolls are made normally and may not be changed. Immediately after using your Act of Desperation, you become fatigued for 2d6 rounds.

### Arrogant

You believe you are better than everyone else, and this attitude comes out in the way you speak and act. You receive a +2 bonus to all Bluff and Intimidate checks.

### Cunning Tactician

Your military training and background have left you a master of battlefield tactics. Whenever you are in charge of a group, you and everyone in your attack force earn a +1 bonus to initiative checks. In starship combat this applies only to your own ship and others in a group under your command. In fighter combat this applies to other fighters in your flight if you are their leader. In surface combat this applies to any allies or vehicles under your command within 30 feet of your position at the time the battle starts.

### Driven

You pursue your goals, whether personal or assigned by others, with single-minded determination. Even when injured or interrupted, you have an uncanny ability to keep your focus securely on the task at hand. You receive a +1 inherent bonus to Will saves and a +2 bonus to all Concentration checks.

### Genetically Altered

Through the years the Dilgar have studied many alien races, performing horrible experiments as a means to potentially improve their own stock. You are the result of one of these alterations. Some of your genetic structure includes DNA or similar material stolen from other races, improving your

physical or mental abilities significantly. However, this modification carries an externally visible trait that cannot be easily hidden. While you wear this proudly as a badge of honour, many 'pure' Dilgar see your kind as a threat and members of alien races who know of your modification treat you with scorn or disdain. As a result, your Charisma score is reduced by two points when you take this feat.

When this feat is selected, choose one of the following statistics and increase it by two points. In addition, this statistic is increased by one point every three levels beginning at 4<sup>th</sup> level (i.e. 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and so on). This replaces the automatic attribute increase that normally occurs every four levels. In addition to the stat increase, a physical change is visible on your body, as listed hereafter. This change may also have other disadvantages as described in the text.

*Strength +2:* Your muscles visibly bulge and often appear to pulse of their own accord. Your height remains the same, but weight increases by 25% over normal. You must exercise frequently (at least two hours per day) or you become extremely overweight very quickly. Your food and water consumption is increased by 10% and you sweat frequently, even in cool weather. You have a -2 penalty to all saving throws against fire, disease or to avoid the effects of fatigue or exhaustion.

*Intelligence +2:* Your cranium seems to push outward along the forehead and above the ears, producing a 'swelled head' appearance. Your heart rate is high as your circulatory system races to keep your enlarged brain properly supplied with blood. You become fatigued one round sooner than normal and the duration of any fatigue effects is increased by one round. Furthermore, when fatigued, all penalties are increased by 50%.

*Wisdom +2:* Your eyes expand in size by about 50% and you rarely blink, giving you a constant 'staring' appearance that is very unsettling to others. You tend to be very contemplative and studious as a general rule and can develop a tendency to be absent-minded. You suffer a -4 penalty on all Concentration checks.

*Constitution +2:* Your torso extends upwards and outwards to accommodate significantly larger lungs and a powerful diaphragm. Armour and clothing must be specially designed to fit your bigger-than-a-barrel chest structure. Your maximum heart rate increases by about 25% but your life span decreases by approximately ten years because of the greater wear and tear on your circulatory system. All penalties for heavier than normal gravity are increased by 50% for you, and you may not take the High-G Tolerance feat.

**Dexterity +2:** You are very thin and wiry, almost to the point of appearing skeletal. Although you eat normally, you do not gain weight and are often thought of as anorexic. You have two hit points less than a typical character of your race and may not acquire the Toughness feat.

There is no known way to genetically improve one's Charisma score.

The Genetically Altered feat can only be taken when your character is first created (genetic modifications generally do not affect someone once they have reached maturity).



## Manipulative

The desires of others are of secondary importance to you.

Friendship is a tool and your enemies are stepping-stones on your path to greatness. Allies are merely those you allow to ride on your coattails and discard when they have served their purpose. Even those superior in rank to yourself are simply obstacles to be overcome.

Because of this outlook you have become quite skilled at manipulating others to suit your purposes. You receive a +2 bonus to all Bluff and Diplomacy checks.

## Ruthless

You stop at nothing to accomplish your goals. Anything goes in your advancement through the ranks or your climb to power. Morals are for the weak. You are what many would call 'evil', but that is just a word used by those of low intelligence to defend their actions. They are fools and one day you will show them all just what you are really capable of.

Because of this philosophy, you have trained yourself to perform activities that ordinary people find distasteful or inappropriate. You have no trouble breaking the law when it suits your purposes, even when the potential consequences could be high. After all, risk is not without reward. You receive a +1 bonus to the following skills: Bluff, Disguise, Forgery, Intimidate and Sleight of Hand.

## Smooth Liar

You have taken the art of telling falsehoods to new extremes. Through constant practice you have become so good at lying that others can rarely tell, even when you are spewing forth a real whopper of a tall tale. You receive a +4 bonus to all Bluff checks. However, because you are so good at lying, you have a real tendency to lie all the time just for the fun of it—in other words, you are almost a pathological liar. Whenever a situation comes up that requires you to tell the truth, you must make a Will save (DC 10) to do so. Otherwise you spill another lie automatically, without even thinking about it.



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Spanning the entire Earth year 2259, Into the Crucible is an entire story arc ready to be dropped into your Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game campaign. Following on from where The Fiery Trial left off, Into the Crucible plunges the players headfirst into a galaxy filled with intrigue, deception and danger. They must unearth hidden secrets, confront horrifying truths and face foes unlike anything they have seen before.

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The Fiery Trial is not required for use of Into the Crucible, but is recommended to provide the best gaming experience by tying both story arcs together.

A complete Story Arc for the Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game.



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