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Wheel of Fire



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Babylon 5 Created by J. Michael Straczynski





A Call to Arms

Babylon 5 Space Combat



BOOK ONE - Rules

Babylon 5 Created by J. Michael Straczynski



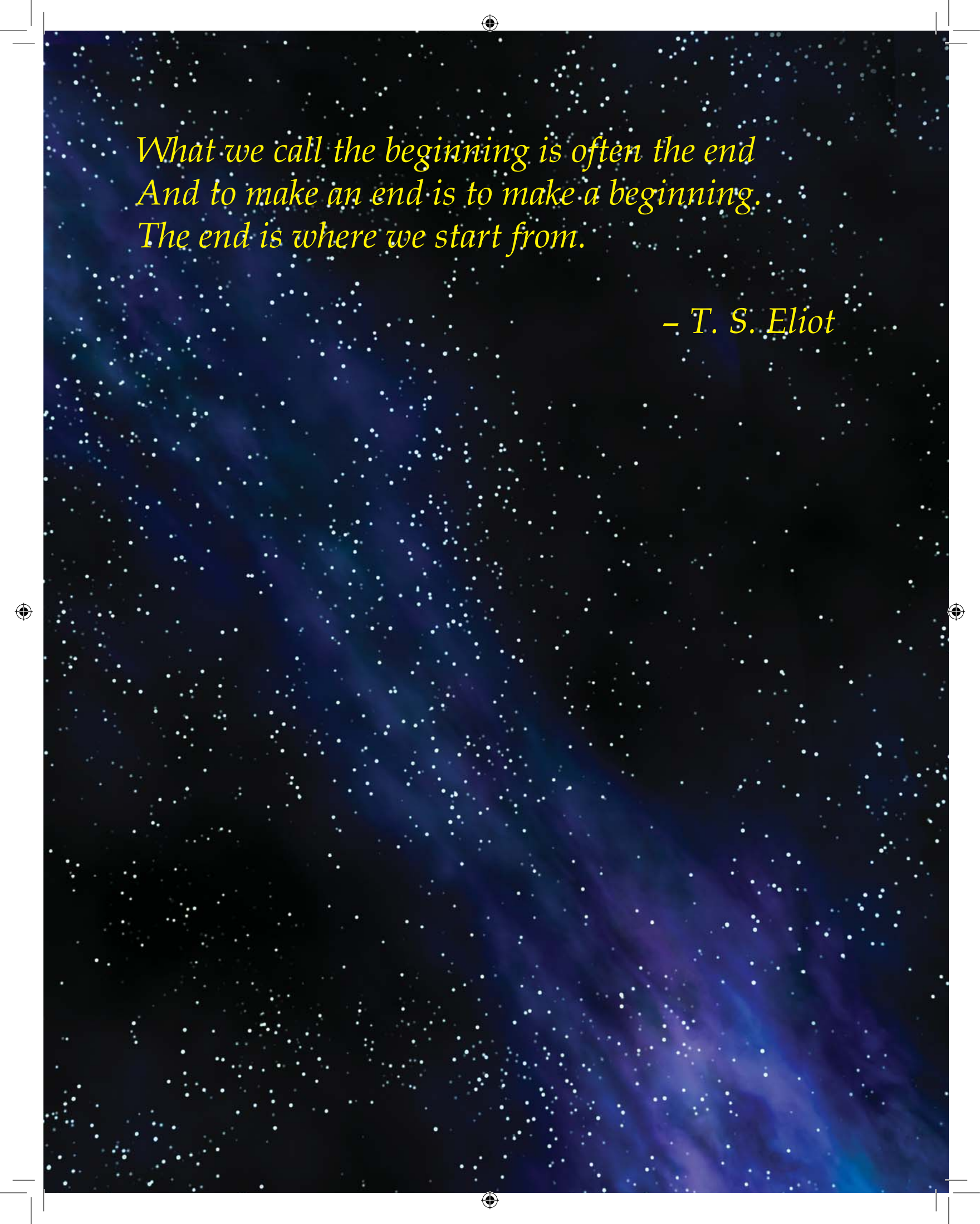
A Call to Arms

Babylon 5 Space Combat



BOOK TWO - Fleet Lists

Babylon 5 Created by J. Michael Straczynski



*What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from.*

– T. S. Eliot

Wheel of Fire

Lizard

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Introduction

The galaxy of 2262 is one that is undergoing drastic change. The events of 2261 have ended the cyclic wars that had defined and shaped galactic history for millennia. The giants have left the playground and now the children have to grow up on their own.

The first few steps of independence were strong ones – the newborn Interstellar Alliance promised co-operation, freedom, prosperity and progress to its member races, a far cry from the typical violent competition that defined interstellar relations just a few months prior. The ISA would be harshly tested in its first few months of life however, and would come almost to the point of collapse. Ironically, the final test, which truly forged the Alliance into a single state, came at the cost of an all-out war against one of its founding members.

2262 also saw the birth of movements that would be fully realised later. It was the year that Psi-Corps began to fall, and the year Babylon 5 began to lose its special place in the galaxy. It was the year when people realised there are no clean endings or beginnings, just moments in time.

There are three main storylines in Season 5. These are the Fall and Rise of Byron, the Centauri War and the Leavetaking. These are not distinct and sharp-edged divisions – rather, they are overlapping waves, with the first part of one story planted in the midst of the next and the final ebb of each story persisting until the very end, and beyond.

2262 was a year of legacies, as well – the telepaths discovered they were the legacy of the Vorlons, the destruction of Centauri Prime was engineered via a legacy of the Shadows and the seeds of each character's departure were planted in earlier years.

Above all else, though, the dominant theme in Season 5 was 'change'. The station had a new commanding officer. Garibaldi had a new job – two new jobs – and, ultimately, a new wife. G'Kar and Londo reconciled. Lyta went from being a helpless prisoner of circumstance to being a great power in her own

right. Zack... remained Zack; proof that some things *are* constants in the universe.

There is no need to force this into a campaign set in 2262. The characters may have their own lives and even as the background of the galaxy convulses in chaos, they may continue on the same paths they always have. However, it might be a good idea to incorporate these thematic elements into play. Have the main focus of the game shift from the Babylon 5 station to some other locale; have characters change alliances, with enemies becoming allies and vice versa; have characters try out new roles, either mechanically (by gaining levels in a new class) or via pure roleplaying. None of this should seem forced or random, however, so it is best to introduce such changes slowly, over time.

Season 5 also contained a large number of very atypical episodes: The Very Long Night of Londo Mollari, Day of the Dead, View from the Gallery, The Corps is Mother, The Corps is Father and Sleeping in Light. All of these offered unique takes on the Babylon 5 universe. A campaign set in 2262 might take this as a cue to be more experimental, to attempt adventures which differ from the usual roleplaying fare. Perhaps players in a regular campaign could play a brief adventure in which they took on the roles of Non-Player Characters and faced their own characters as allies or enemies. A 'flashback' game could show the character's parents during the time of the Dilgar War, or a 'flash forward', a la Sleeping in Light, could show what the characters might be doing 20 years hence.



Personalities of 2262

President John Sheridan of the Interstellar Alliance 'Well, look at that. The sun's coming up.'

15th level Human Officer (fleet)/3rd level Diplomat

Hit Points: 40

Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 20 (+10 Reflex)

Attacks: +17/+12/+7 melee or +18/+13/+8 ranged

Special Qualities: Branch Elite, Branch Specialisation (fleet), Contact x2, Legendary Speech, Rallying Call (2/day), Touched By A Vorlon, Way of Command

Saves: Fort +8, Reflex +10, Will +13

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 18

Skills: Bluff +15, Computer Use +11, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +21, Drive +3, Gather Information +7, Intimidate +13, Jump +6, Listen +11, Medical +4, Pilot +17, Sense Motive +17, Spot +6, Technical (space travel) +18

Feats: Alertness, Data Access, First Contact Protocol, Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Spacecraft Proficiency, Resist Scan, Weapon Focus (uni-pulse cannon), Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons)

Standard Equipment: ISA Uniform, Wrist Link, EF-7 PPG

Soldier... Diplomat... Rebel... and now Politician. John Sheridan's life has taken him to strange places, even to the edge of death itself. In 2262, he ascended into history by becoming the first President of the Interstellar Alliance. The prior year had already been momentous – he had come back from the dead, he had ended the aeons-long war between the Shadows and the Vorlons, forged an alliance among a dozen worlds which had been intent on killing each other mere months before, endured imprisonment, torture and ultimately rode to victory at the head of the fleet which liberated Earth from the Clark tyranny. Somehow, in all this, he found the time to marry Delenn.



The events of 2261 hardened Sheridan but did not change him entirely. He never wavered in either his determination or his values - he did not hesitate to use the force required to liberate Earth, but did all he could to spare the lives of his fellow soldiers. He used telepaths as living bombs because he had to, but took every effort to choose those who had the least to lose. He could compromise on implementations, but never on principles and that strength and resolve would turn out to be vital in the coming year.

2262 promises to be no less exciting. John Sheridan has, before him, the task of leading a newborn nation, a nation composed of many worlds, many races. The undertaking is audacious in the extreme and there are many who wish to see him fail. During the coming year, he will be forced to bend, if not break, many of his principles and will see his dream nearly die stillborn.

Roleplaying with Sheridan

Relentless determination coupled with clear-eyed idealism, all under a cloud of doubt and introspection. Sheridan in 2262 is a man with a mission, a crusader, a visionary - but he is also a man who is willing to ask himself if he is doing the right thing. He expresses public certainty but private doubt and that is his strength - his ability to not be taken in by his own propaganda, to not see himself as divine or infallible, grants him the moral compass necessary to keep leadership from becoming tyranny.

Sheridan is somewhat more distant from the day-to-day business of Babylon 5 - indeed, he no longer has any authority over the place. As the President of the Alliance, he is surrounded by several layers of bureaucracy and only those close to him can contact him directly.

Ambassador Delenn,
of the Family Mir
'The flame also reminds
us that life is precious,
as each flame is unique.
When it goes out, it's gone
forever.'

16th Level Human-Minbari Hybrid (religious)
 Diplomat
 Hit Points: 22
 Initiative: +4 (+2 Dex, +2 Minbari)
 Speed: 30 ft.
 DV: 19 (+9 Reflex)
 Attacks: +8/+3 melee or +10/+5 ranged

Special Qualities: Contact x7, Improved Diplomacy +4, Improved Government Resources

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +15

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 18

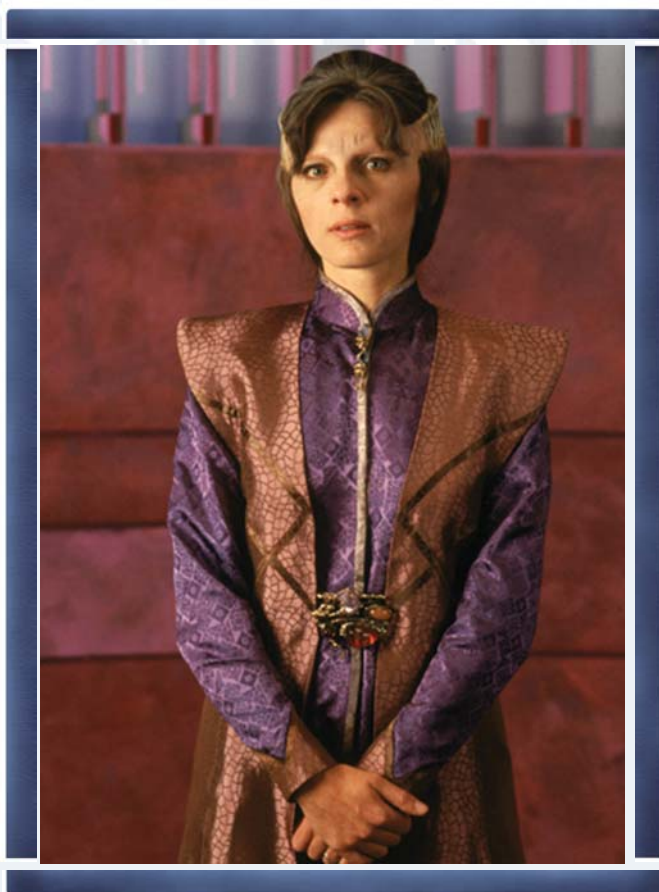
Skills: Appraise +16, Bluff +19, Computer Use +14, Diplomacy +28, Gather Information +18, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (alien life) +16, Knowledge (human society & culture) +16, Knowledge (Minbari history) +17, Knowledge (star systems) +14, Listen +14, Sense Motive +23

Feats: Divine Guidance*, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Resist Scan, Silent Tread

Standard Equipment: Robes, Link

* This feat comes from the *Minbari Federation Fact Book*. Delenn gains a +2 bonus to all Concentration checks and, once per day, may choose to pass any saving throw she had failed. Delenn suffers subdual damage equal to the difference between her saving throw and the save's DC when employing this ability.

Delenn's trials during 2261 were no less intense than those of her beloved. She learned that the Vorlons, whom she had always admired and respected, were little better than the Shadows she despised. She saw the thousand year



peace of her homeworld teeter on the brink of civil war and came close to sacrificing her life in order to end it. She changed the nature of Minbari society by reforming the Grey Council around a Worker Caste majority. She knew the pain of staying behind while the man she loved led a war against his own people.

Throughout 2261, Delenn's faith, in the absence of proof, gave her the strength she needed to go on. She refused to believe John had died at Z'ha'dum, she trusted Neroon when all around her told her not to, she held back her forces from Earth because she knew John had to win the war on his terms. This ability to step into the abyss supported only by her belief that she would not fall is something that continued to define her character.

Roleplaying with Delenn

Delenn is much more intense in this season. The last few years have seen radical changes in her society and in her life, and many of the most sacred truths she has clung to have been shown to be, if not lies, then not entirely true. The Minbari civil war showed her the darkness that still existed within her own people and her actions in breaking and then reforming the Grey Council made her question the rote obedience to tradition which was at the heart of Minbari culture. Her joy in being married to Sheridan is tempered by the shadow of death that hangs over him. She is also learning the difficult art of living with someone while maintaining one's own life and she is also learning that gain often comes with loss – as one love comes to dominate her life, others she loves are pushed aside.

Head of Alliance Security Michael Garibaldi

'Why the war and not the peace? Because it's exciting, and because on some level people like to see something big fall apart and explode from the inside out. And right now, John, we're that something.'

7th level human officer (fleet)/6th level Soldier/1st level Agent

Hit Points: 41

Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 improved initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 19 (+9 Reflex)

Attacks: +16/+11/+6 melee or +16/+11/+6 ranged

Special Qualities: Branch Specialisation (fleet), Covering Fire, Rallying Call, Security Systems

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +8

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

Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +9, Climb +4, Computer Use +15, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +5, Intimidate +11, Listen +5, Jump +5, Pilot +10, Sense Motive +12, Spot +11, Survival +4, Technical (electronic) +2, Technical (space travel) +5

Feats: Alertness, Data Access, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Aim, Skill Focus (Computer Use), Spacecraft Proficiency, Weapon Focus (PPG), Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons), Weapon Specialisation (PPG)

Standard Equipment: ISA wrist link, EF-7 PPG

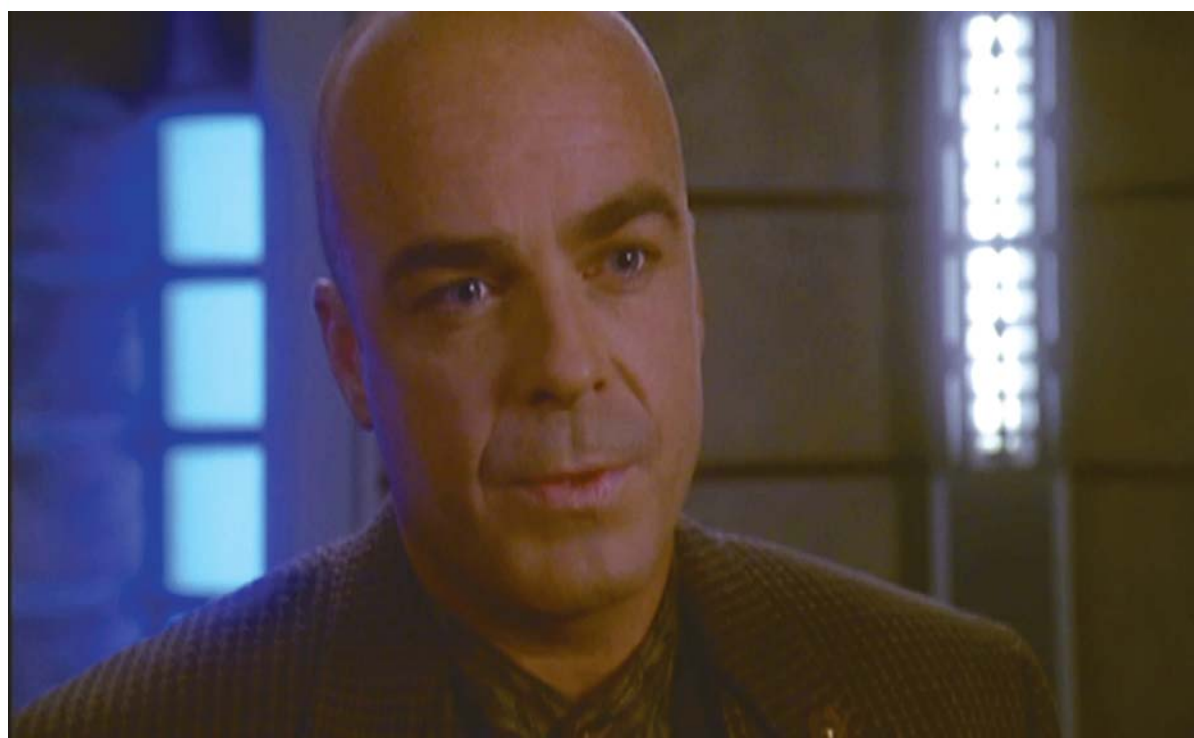
2261 may have been the worst year of Mr. Garibaldi's life and it was up against considerable competition. Indeed, for most of the year, he was barely there – his true personality was altered, shifted and changed by Bester, until he had become almost a caricature of himself – paranoid instead of wary, hostile instead of cynical. He quit his job, abandoned the station and, ultimately, betrayed Sheridan to Clark, all as part of a complex plan by the Psi-Corps to track down a plot against telepaths. As a final form of torture, Bester restored Michael's true personality, allowing him to remember everything he did. The only thing holding Mr Garibaldi together as 2262 dawns is his hope of vengeance against Bester. Should that hope ever fade, Michael will surely plunge into the abyss...

Garibaldi spent most of 2261 cut off from his friends and lived a life almost parallel to theirs. He played only a minor role in the end of the Shadow War and actively opposed Sheridan's actions in the civil war. Only at the end did he rejoin his old allies and there he played a pivotal part in saving Sheridan.

The only bright spot of 2261 is that Michael's former lover, Lise, re-entered his life, albeit under tragic circumstances.

Roleplaying with Garibaldi

Garibaldi tries to regain some of his brash confidence early on, when he becomes head of Alliance Intelligence, but it is a feeble effort, at best. Garibaldi is a man who has lost his way in life – he never intended to return to Babylon 5 to stay and while he does a credible job as head of Intelligence – for a while – it is not, as the Minbari might say, the 'calling of his heart'. He is motivated mostly by guilt for



his actions in 2261 and his hatred of Bester. His encounter with the Psi-Cop early in 2262 sends him spiralling onto another dark, downward path and he spends most of the year trapped inside a bottle, becoming less useful to his friends and dangerous not only to himself, and them, but to the galaxy at large, as his failures help tilt the nascent Alliance towards civil war.

In short, Mr Garibaldi in 2262 is an often angry and frustrated man, but one with great power and the trust of many other people with great power. The balance between this rage and his iron self-control is often very weak indeed...

Citizen G'Kar of the Narn Regime

'Mollari, understand that I can never forgive your people for what they did to my world. My people can never forgive your people. But I... can forgive... you.'

9th Level Narn Diplomat/3rd Level Officer (ground forces)/4th Level Soldier

Hit Points: 31

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 15 (+5 Reflex)

Attacks: +15/+10 melee or +12/+7 ranged

Special Qualities: Branch Specialisation (ground forces), Contact x5, Covering Fire, Enlightened*, Government Resources, Improved Diplomacy +2, Low-Light Vision, Rallying Call

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +11

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 13 Wis 15, Cha 15
Skills: Bluff +5, Climb +8, Computer Use +8, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +16, Gather Information +9, Intimidate +15, Listen +11, Perform +5, Pilot +7, Sense Motive +9, Spot +8, Survival +8

Feats: Blood Oath, Blood Rage, Hobby (Perform), Liturgies of the Heart, Point Blank Shot, Spacecraft Proficiency, Weapon Focus (PPG Rifle), Weapon Proficiency (Heavy Weapons)

***Enlightened:** G'Kar's trials push him through the final stages of letting go of the self. He is enlightened in a way that few beings will ever manage to be. For now, this enlightenment manifests as an almost legendary physical toughness and ability to do what is necessary. Once per



day, he may use his Will save bonus instead of his Strength modifier for a single Strength check, or in place of Fortitude for a Fortitude save.

2261 was a dark year for G'Kar as well, both literally – as he lost an eye – and figuratively, as he found himself imprisoned and tortured. It was also a year of transformation, a year in which he found he had common cause with his greatest enemy. He entered the year an outcast, a wanted man who could not return to his home and who had only the shakiest of authority over his people on Babylon 5. He finished the year in triumph, seen as the saviour of his people and nearly given dictatorial powers. Through it all, he continued his transition from warrior to prophet.

G'Kar enters 2262 at his peak – a member of the Advisory Board of the Alliance, respected by the leaders of countless worlds and the focus of adoration at home. He should realise, of course, that it is all downhill from here...

Roleplaying with G'Kar

G'kar in 2262 is so different from G'Kar in 2258 that he is almost a new character – yet every step along the path from the scheming G'Kar of 'The Gathering' to the philosophical G'Kar of 'The Ragged Edge' was carefully

shown. There are still hints of the raging warrior – such as when he threatens to burn down the Imperial Palace if Na'Toth is not freed – but they are few and far between. G'Kar has found peace with himself and the universe.

He has also developed a strongly flamboyant air. He has become prone to grand gestures and sweeping metaphor and he has found a strong sense of humour, which he uses as a defensive mechanism. He is also somewhat ashamed of his past – he regrets his words of hatred, of bigotry, of intolerance. He has learned forgiveness. This may also put him at odds with those who worked with him in the past, doing some of the darker deeds which he once thought necessary.

G'Kar is very much out among the people in 2262, despite his best efforts to avoid them. He is relatively easy to find and contact, though there will usually be a crowd of supplicants surrounding him or Ta'Lon serving as his bodyguard.

Prime Minister Londo Mollari (Emperor Mollari II)

‘Knowing that every day you succeed, they die a little more inside, makes the endeavour eminently satisfying.’

13th Level Centauri Diplomat/1st Level Officer (fleet)

Hit Points: 23

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 15 (+5 Reflex)

Attacks: +7/+2 melee or +8/+3 ranged

Special Qualities: Branch Specialisation (fleet), Contacts x 7, Government Resources, Improved Diplomacy +3

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +10

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16

Skills: Appraise +14, Bluff +16, Computer Use +11, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +17, Intimidate +13,

Knowledge (noble houses) +14, Pilot +6, Sense Motive +13, Technical (electronics) +3

Feats: Data Access, Great Fortitude, Nerves of Steel, Skill Focus (Computer Use), Spacecraft Proficiency, Toughness, Weapon Focus (coutari)

Londo *should* be a happy man. The events of 2261 placed him firmly on the road to the power he has always craved. He led a coup against the mad Emperor Cartagia, appointed a harmless man as Regent and secured for himself the post of Prime Minister. He worked with G’Kar to free Narn and even managed to forge a strange sort of understanding, if not friendship, with his onetime arch-enemy. He was instrumental in forming the coalition of races which offered support to Sheridan in the final days of the Civil War, a coalition which would give rise to the Interstellar Alliance. He even managed to free Centauri Prime from the grip of the Shadows and to take his revenge on Mr Morden for the death of Adira.

Londo should be a happy man – but he is not. He long ago learned that the path he was on would lead to a lonely, wretched life for him and everything he has done cemented that fate. He has seen the future and knows he cannot change it. The year 2262 would bring nothing but more woe, as he finds choice after choice removed from him,



until he ends up with everything he has ever wanted, but nothing that he needs.

Roleplaying with Londo

Londo has always carried a burden of inner sadness, but that burden is much closer to the surface now. His boisterous, flamboyant side comes out only with effort, or when he is confronted with minor frustrations. Much of the time, he is dour and glum. He is resigned to his fate and he no longer even struggles to find much happiness. Early in 2261, there are some sparks of the old Londo, especially when he is on Babylon 5 or interacting with G'Kar, but as the year wears on, Londo's spirit is ground down ever further.

He has come to appreciate the value of friendship and loyalty over the value of power and with this appreciation comes the knowledge he learned the lesson too late. 2262 contains tragedies for everyone, but most especially for Londo.

Captain Elizabeth Lochley

'You don't have to solve every problem all at once. Problems are solved in pieces.'

1st level Human Lurker/10th level Officer (fleet)

Hit Points: 26

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 19 (+9 Reflex)

Attacks: +10/+5 melee or +11/+6 ranged

Special Qualities: Lurker's Knowledge, Branch Specialisation (fleet), Rallying Call, Way of Command

Saves: Fort +7, Reflex +4, Will +11

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 15

Skills: Appraise +10, Computer Use +12, Bluff +10, Diplomacy +15, Hide +5, Intimidate +6, Listen +6, Medical +8, Move Silently +5, Pilot +8, Sense Motive +14, Spot +8, Survival +8

Feats: Data Access, Dogfighter, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Sixth Sense, Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons)

Standard Equipment: EarthForce link, EF-7 PPG

Elizabeth Lochley was born on Earth and comes from a long line of military personnel. Her father was career

military, although this was not his dream – he wanted to be a painter. The stress of living a life that was contrary to his desires made him an alcoholic and he took his rage and frustration out on his family. This led Elizabeth to run away in her late teens, where she spent time on the streets, heavily involved in drugs, petty crime and doing whatever she had to do to survive. The death by overdose of her closest friend caused her to return home and she managed to turn her life around, joining EarthForce and serving with distinction.

Early in her career, she met a young John Sheridan. The two strong, passionate, personalities immediately clicked and they fell madly in love and quickly married – only to discover that two people who never compromise cannot sustain the give and take of a marriage and were amicably divorced within a few months. The two had little contact for the next twenty-odd years, until Sheridan picked her to run the Babylon station.

During the Civil War, Lochley had remained loyal to Clark and carefully managed to avoid ever being given orders which her conscience would not have let her obey.

Roleplaying with Lochley

To be blunt, Lochley is a replacement for Ivanova, both within the context of the story and within the larger context of the realities of television production. She has much in common with Ivanova, because she needs to fill many of the same story roles which, in an alternate universe, Ivanova would have filled. She also *differs* in many ways, and running her as 'Ivanova Lite' or 'Ivanova 2.0' would be a disservice to the character. Lochley has a stubborn optimism in place of Ivanova's fatalism. She works well within power hierarchies and respects authority, whereas Ivanova tends to obey only those rules which suit her and only those individuals she personally respects. Lochley does not share Ivanova's loathing of the Psi-Corps and is willing to work with them. She is also skilled at smoothing out problems with diplomacy and compromise, not threats and intimidation – though she can be unyielding when she has to be.

Lochley is also a blank slate as far as long-time Players are concerned. They will have a chance to make a first impression and they had better try to make it a good one. Of course, if the Characters have been regularly involved in the affairs of the Command Staff or have shown up often on security reports, it is likely she will have notes on them in her briefings.



Ambassador Vir Cotto

‘My God! What is wrong with you people? Don’t you have anything else better to do? Why don’t you get a hobby? Read a book or something?’

7th Level Centauri Diplomat

Hit Points: 11

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 12 (+2 Reflex)

Attacks: +2 melee or +3 ranged

Special Qualities: Contact (House Cotto) x3, Government Resources, Improved Diplomacy +1

Saves: Fort +2, Reflex +2, Will +8

Abilities: Str 9, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12

Skills: Bluff +7, Computer Use +10, Diplomacy +11, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (Centauri noble houses) +9, Knowledge (political etiquette) +12, Listen +9, Sense Motive +11, Spot +4

Feats: Alien Empathy (Minbari), Iron Will, Skill Focus (Knowledge (political etiquette))

Vir has grown up since his days as a ‘moon-faced assassin of joy’. He is darker, harsher, more cynical and much more self-confident. While he can still sometimes be flustered and confused, this is more affectation than reality; a habit he has acquired and one which can be used to make his enemies underestimate him. At one point, it was seemingly impossible to underestimate Vir – by 2262; doing so is an act of extreme stupidity. He has learned a great deal of Londo’s cunning and balances it with a firm moral core which Londo never had. His willingness to take risks to help others, his loyalty to his friends and the allies those two traits have earned him make him a powerful player in the game of politics and have begun to shape him into the Emperor he will one day become.

Roleplaying with Vir

Vir’s surface mannerisms are not much different than they have always been – he babbles when excited, he often seems nervous, he tends to react poorly to sudden acts of violence. Beneath the surface, he has changed. Given a moment or two to find his bearings, he is capable of a hard-edged certainty that would surprise those who do not know him well. He has killed a self-proclaimed god and while



he is generally adverse to the use of force, he has learned to tap into the flamboyant fury that a wronged Centauri is prone to express. Vir is motivated by his sense of justice and moral outrage and this can cause him to walk forward into the fires of hell. His knees may be shaking as he does it, but he will go.

Lyta Alexander

'You shouldn't have woken up. This is just a dream. This. Never. Happened.'

1st Level Human Lurker/15th Level Telepath (P15*)

Hit Points: 29

Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 19 (+9 Reflex)

Attacks: +11/+6/+1 melee or +13/+8/+3 ranged

Special Qualities: Lurker's Knowledge, Maintain Concentration, Vorlon Augmentation

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +14

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 16

Skills: Bluff +13, Climb +6, Computer Use +10, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +5, Hide +6, Intimidate +14, Jump +3, Knowledge (telepathy) +18, Listen +8, Move Silently +6, Sense Motive +19, Spot +6, Telepathy +20

Feats: Ability Focus (deep scan), Adaptive Mind, Combat Telepath, Defensive Block, Far Telepathy, Gestalt, Improved Defensive Block, Iron Will, Walking the Road

Telepathic Abilities: Accidental Scan, Communication, Danger Sense, Deep Scan, Jamming, Locate Mind, Mind Shield, Nerve Simulation, Pain, Sense Telepathy, Surface Scan

*Lyta has been augmented to be far more powerful than any human telepath. At the start of Season 5, treat her as a P12. After her first intimate encounter with Byron, raise her to P13, after his death, she elevates to P14 and by the time she leaves with G'Kar, treat her as P15.

In addition, Lyta has been subjected to Vorlon augmentation, performed when she entered their area of the galaxy. These augmentations have resulted in her much-improved P-Rating and allow her to carry the essence of a Vorlon inside her without dying. She also has the biological equivalent of a breather mask in regards to the special atmosphere Vorlons require to breathe, manifesting as gills that are all but invisible when closed. Additionally, she has a pool of 20 points of subdual damage that she may draw from in order to use her telepathic abilities (increase to 30 when she goes to P13, 40 when she goes to P14 and 50 when she goes to P15). She may use this pool before her own hit points and they heal at the normal rate.

Lyta in 2261 was the galaxy's punching bag. She was a convenient tool to be pulled out when needed and otherwise ignored. She was used and discarded by the Vorlons and kept constantly on the outside by Sheridan and his inner circle. The Psi-Corps wanted her, but she did not want them. Some people, when constantly battered around by life, crumble and give in. Others, however, find within themselves the strength and focus needed to stand up and fight back.

Roleplaying with Lyta

She is mad as hell and she is not going to take it anymore. That is Lyta in 2262 in a nutshell. She has torn through her own self-imposed barriers of humility and subservience. Byron helped set her on the path, but she has advanced beyond his, or anyone else's, expectations. Once she decided to stop holding back, she became almost a different person. Those who encounter her in 2262, expecting to find someone willing to do anything just for a chance at being accepted or feeling as if she belongs, will be shocked



by what they find. The new Lyta is confident almost to the point of arrogance and, given her power, her arrogance is not unwarranted. She will not do things because other people want her to, but because she either wants to or because she's going to get paid – a lot.

Lennier of the Third

Fain of Chudomo

'Tell me what you want done and I will make it happen, no matter the cost.'

6th level Minbari (religious) Diplomat/2nd level Soldier/2nd level Anla'Shok Ranger

Hit Points: 22

Initiative: +9 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative, +2 Minbari)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 17 (+7 Reflex)

Attacks: +10/+5 melee or +10/+5 ranged

Special Qualities: Contact x3, Fearless, Garb of Honour, Government Resources, Improved Diplomacy +1, Places Unseen, The Applications of Terror

Saves: Fort +8, Reflex +7, Will +8

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 10

Skills: Bluff +6, Computer Use +6, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +9, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (probability) +7, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (human society and culture) +9, Knowledge (Centauri society and culture) +5, Medical +6, Move Silently +5, Listen +9, Sense Motive +7

Feats: Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Silent Tread, Toughness, Weapon Focus (fighting pike), Weapon Focus (unarmed)

Standard Equipment: Ranger outfit, fighting pike

Lennier ended 2161 at a crossroads. He had been a vital part of Delenn's life and of the Alliance of Light, but he began to feel that his role was diminishing. Sheridan was becoming a greater and greater part of her life and he could never feel the same loyalty to him as he did to her. More and more, he was becoming an outsider. His growing jealousy towards Sheridan was becoming evident to everyone, though most worked hard to not notice it or to excuse it, most especially Delenn, who could not imagine such failings in Lennier. As 2262 begins, Lennier concludes he needs to change himself and this year will take him through some fairly dramatic changes.



Roleplaying with Lennier

Lennier is what he has always been – loyal, soft-spoken and determined – but, as with many other characters, he has gained a harder edge. He is less awed by power, no longer the humble acolyte who could sum up his life in three sentences. He is willing to question tradition and disobey orders, if he thinks it is justified. He is also increasingly convinced both that Sheridan is the wrong choice for Delenn and that he, Lennier, needs to become more like Sheridan in order to win Delenn's love. He is somewhat more short-tempered and impulsive than once he was, able to take the initiative and make snap decisions. Unfortunately, some of those hastily made decisions will turn out to cause a lifetime of regret...

Dr Stephen Franklin

'That's why we're all here: to better understand one another and treat each other with sympathy and compassion, commodities

which are all too often in short supply.'

12th Level Human Scientist

Hit Points: 17

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 15 (+5 Reflex)

Attacks: +6/+1 melee or +7/+2 ranged

Special Qualities: Peripheral Studies (biotechnology, xenobiology), Primary area of Study (medical), Use Alien Artefact

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +11

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

Skills: Appraise +5, Bluff +13, Computer Use +16, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +12, Gather Information +11, Knowledge (alien language) +17, Knowledge (alien life) +17, Knowledge (biotechnology) +12, Knowledge (telepathy) +4, Knowledge (xenobiology) +20, Medical +20, Profession (ship's doctor) +14, Sense Motive +7, Spot +12, Technical (electronics) +12

Feats: Alien Anatomy, Contact (Tessa Holland), Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Knowledge (xenobiology)), Skill Focus (Medical)

Note: Doctor Franklin has the Xenobiology speciality as listed in *The Coming of Shadows*. As such, he only suffers a -5 penalty to Medical checks performed on non-humans. If he can communicate with the patient, this penalty disappears and is replaced with a +3 circumstance bonus instead.

Franklin spent 2261 free of stims and with a renewed sense of who he was as a person, not merely as a doctor. He also found his life taking on a much more active role, as he was tapped to perform undercover operations because of his extensive contacts, which were, in turn, the result of his many humanitarian acts. Proving that “no good deed goes unpunished”, his compassion put him at risk of death many times and he also was forced to compromise some of his most cherished principles in the name of a greater good, something which will continue to weigh on his conscience.

Roleplaying Dr Franklin

Franklin in 2262 is someone happy to put his ‘cloak & dagger’ days behind him and return to doctoring – until he is tempted by a chance to work on something which could benefit far more people than his personal work ever could. Over the course of the year, he will find himself drawn, once again, into intrigues, whether it is the dark secret of

the Hyach or mysteries on the Drazi homeworld. He will also be faced with choices and opportunities, which will ultimately lead to life-changing consequences.

Franklin’s overarching mission in 2262 – his work on cross-species diseases – will offer him many opportunities to interact with PCs, to ask them to travel to places he cannot, to return samples or information which he needs to complete his work.

Security Chief Zack Allen

‘So what is it this time, Mr Bester? Hunting out freedom-fighters, pulling wings off flies, annexing Sudetenland?’

9th Level Human Soldier

Hit Points: 33

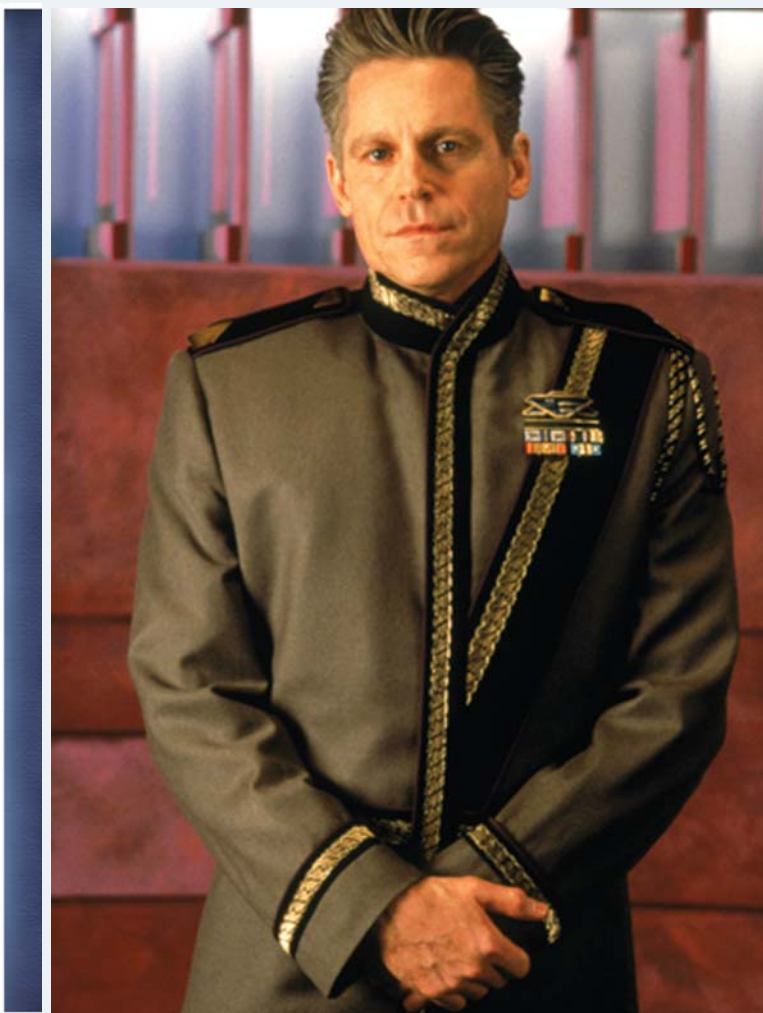
Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 18 (+8 Reflex)



Attacks: +10/+5 melee or +12/+7 ranged



Special Qualities: Covering Fire, To The Limit

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +5

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

Skills: Balance +2, Bluff +4, Climb +4, Computer Use +5, Concentration +2, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +8, Listen +4, Jump +5, Move Silently +4, Search +3, Sense Motive +9, Spot +7, Survival +2

Feats: Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Aim, Skill Focus (Search), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Spot +6, Survival +2

Zack remains a fixture at Babylon 5. In 2262 he found himself thrust, somewhat against his will, into the role of head of security for the station. For most of the year he treated himself as a caretaker for Garibaldi's job and never felt comfortable in the position. Only by year's end did he truly realise this was now his job.

Roleplaying with Zack

Zack has finally accepted his role and, now that he has, does not like being second-guessed or treated as a newcomer. He is less outgoing and flamboyant than Mr. Garibaldi and much more prone to rely on physical evidence than on a network of contacts and informants. He has them, of course – he would be a very poor security chief if he did not – but he is more likely to learn something from a bloodstain than from a stool pigeon.

Lieutenant David Corwin

'There seems to be a slight problem, sir. It's kind of hard to explain. We seem to be missing a piece of the station.'

6th level Human Officer (fleet)

Hit Points: 16

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 13 (+3 Reflex)

Attacks: +5/+0 melee or +6/+1 ranged

Special Qualities: Branch Specialisation (fleet), Rallying Call

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +7

Abilities: Str 9, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 11

Skills: Computer Use +14, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +9, Listen +9, Medical +4, Sense Motive +9, Spot +10, Technical (space travel) +11

Feats: Alertness, Data Access, Iron Will, Nerves of Steel, Skill Focus (Computer Use), Skill Focus (Technical (space travel)), Spacecraft Proficiency

Corwin has grown into being a solid part of the command staff, though he is much stronger in a subordinate role. He is confident in his position and has remained calm and in control during some of the most crisis-ridden times in the station's history.



Roleplaying with Corwin

Corwin has an almost Lennier-like role; he is the silent supporter, the one who rarely speaks up but who is always there to be counted on. He has, however, gained a lot of self-confidence in the past year and sees himself as an 'old hand', especially when compared to Lochley. Possibly due to a lack of prior history, or perhaps because both he and she share a 'by the book' mentality, his relationship with Lochley is stronger and more professional than his one with Ivanova. He is very much her right hand man and she is willing to let him do his job so that she can do hers.

Psi-Cop Alfred Bester
'Let me ask you something, Mr. Garibaldi, a purely philosophical question. On a scale of 1 to 10, how stupid do you think I am anyway?'

10th Level Human Psi-Cop/10th Level Human Telepath (P12)

Hit Points: 53

Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 21 (+11 Reflex)

Attacks: +17/+12/+7/+2 melee or +19/+14+15/+3 ranged
Special Qualities: Black Omega Squadron, Contact x 3, External Defences, Maintain Concentration, Quick Scan, Superior Defensive Block, The Corps Is Mother, The Corps Is Father

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +11, Will +16

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 18

Skills: Bluff +11, Computer Use +7, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +10, Intimidation +20, Knowledge (telepathy) +20, Listen +10, Pilot +13, Sense Motive +15, Spot +11, Telepathy +27, Technical (space travel) +6

Feats: Ability focus (danger sense), Ability Focus (deep scan), Ability Focus (sense mind), Ability Focus (surface scan), Alertness, Combat Telepath, Defensive Block, Far Telepathy, Iron Will, Mental fortress, Mind Shredder, Point Blank Shot, Spacecraft Proficiency, Weapon Focus (PPG), Weapon Proficiency (spacecraft weapons)

Telepathic Abilities: Accidental Scan, Action Block, Communication, Danger Sense, Deep Scan, False Memory Implantation, Locate Mind, Mind Shield, Second Sight, Sense Telepathy, Surface Scan



Alfred Bester is at the height of his professional game following 2261. In that year, he successfully pulled off a complex scheme that ruined the life of one of his perennial nemeses and, not coincidentally, removed one of the greatest threats to the Psi-Corps in recent decades. Clark, who was exploiting telepaths at the behest of the Shadows, was removed from power – but the power he had granted to the Psi-Corps as his own counter to the Shadows remained in their hands. Bester's personal life remains somewhat bleak, as his beloved Catherine is still in stasis, but he is used to that level of misery.

In 2262, Bester will once more return to what his superiors sarcastically call 'his favourite place in the universe', where he will face one loss and two wins, though the latter will both be marred by tragedy. He will, in the process, set in motion events that will lead to the destruction of his beloved Corps and of everything else he has held dear.

Roleplaying with Bester

Bester is more self-confident and assured than ever. He takes great joy in his invulnerability, in the fact that while everyone on B5 knows what he is and what he does; there is nothing they can do about it. The one thing that must be remembered is that Bester is not a hypocrite when he speaks of his love for his fellow telepaths. He will not

hesitate to kill a blip if he has to, but he genuinely does not like it and will use any reasonable means to avoid having to do it. He does, however, consider the Corps as a whole more important than the life of any individual telepath – the family comes before the person and anyone can be sacrificed if it will make the family stronger.

Byron Gordon

'But where is it written that all our dreams must be small ones?'

10th Level Human Telepath (P12)/1st Level Psi-Cop/3rd Level Lurker

Hit Points: 24

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 16 (+6 Reflex)

Attacks: +8/+3 melee or +9/+4 ranged

Special Qualities: Lurker's Knowledge, Maintain Concentration, Superior Defensive Block, Telepath, The Corps Is Mother*

Saves: Fort +9, Reflex +6, Will +13

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 18, Char 20

Skills: Bluff +18, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +18, Hide +6, Intimidate +11, Gather Information +12, Listen +17, Knowledge (telepathy) +20, Move Silently +6, Sense Motive +10, Survival +14, Telepathy +22

Feats: Ability Focus (Deep Scan), Combat Telepath, Defensive Block, Gestalt, Iron Will, Meditation, Mental Fortress, Skill Focus (Telepathy)

Telepathic Abilities: Accidental Scan, Deep Scan, Locate Mind, Mind Shield, Pain, Reality Fabrication, Sense Telepathy, Surface Scan, Warning

*Due to his rogue status, Byron may not use this ability

Byron was a rising star in the Psi-Corps, a P12, destined to be a Psi-Cop and Bester's golden boy, a personal protégé. All of this fell apart when he was confronted with the true nature of what it meant to 'run with the big dogs'. Shortly after one brutal incident, the man Bester once saw as his replacement became a blip – but not just any blip. Byron was not simply running from, he was also running *to*. He had a vision beyond mere survival and he shared this with others, and soon founded a movement. He and his followers went from world to world, developing their philosophy and solidifying their plans and finally ended up where true seekers always end up – Babylon 5.

Roleplaying Byron

Byron is a prophet, a visionary, a true seeker, a man with a mission. He has quite a lot in common with his nemesis, Alfred Bester – both are literate men in an alliterate age. Both are extremely arrogant, in their own fashions. Both are convinced of the superiority of telepaths over mundanes. They differ though, in that Byron values life – even mundane life – and freedom. Bester does not. Byron will not kill, will not even raise a fist in his own defence. Byron does not believe telepaths should rule mundanes, but that they should be forever separate from them – the two breeds of man cannot mix.

Byron can be annoying and frustrating. He will often dance around difficult questions, or answer a question with a question. He refuses to pretend to not have his abilities and will happily answer a mundane's question before it is asked. He is also not hesitant to criticise or condemn, often in the strongest terms. He has very little use for politeness; his all-telepath society has no room for social lies and pretences and he disdains such games even when dealing with non-telepaths. He is very passionate and tends to deeply feel both the triumphs and tragedies of those around him.



The Galaxy of 2262

This chapter contains a detailed episode guide for Season 5 of the Babylon 5 TV show. During this season, the Babylon station became somewhat less of a focus for events. It was a place where people met and planned but the action was often taking place off-station, especially after the 'telepath arc' had finished. From the Drazi homeworld to Centauri Prime, from hidden Psi Corps bases to the corporate suites of Mars Dome One, the action in season 5 echoed a recurrent theme throughout the season; the passing of one age and the dawn of a new one. Babylon 5, the station, is being left behind, symbolically and literally, and the wider universe is opening up.

Dominant themes here are change, transition and consequences. The spectacular action of Season 4 is less present; what happens here is the aftermath, as the results of what the characters did in 2261 play out. It is a time of endings, but also of beginnings. By the time the season draws to a close, all the major and most of the minor characters will have ended one life and begun another, sometimes a better one, sometimes a more tragic one.

These themes can be echoed in gameplay. Characters may switch roles or move on. Diplomats may become active in the politics on their homeworld or quit to become free agents. Officers may resign their commission, while formerly independent characters may see a call to serve and join with their worlds' military. Lurkers may straighten out and find legitimate work using their skills; a straight-laced doctor or grizzled soldier might find themselves spiralling down into the depths, figuratively and literally.

The other theme, consequences, can also impact play. If a campaign has been running for a long time, the actions of characters may begin generating ripples that can rebound in unexpected ways. Seemingly innocuous actions may generate new enemies or a short-term solution to a problem may lead to long-term harm.

Of course, not all campaigns are old. A campaign beginning in 2262 will not be one of changes, but of beginnings. The galaxy of 2262 is a galaxy reborn. A grand Alliance has been formed, Mars is free of Earth, Earth is free of Clark, the First Ones who dominated all recorded galactic history are gone, leaving the playground to the children at long last. Infinite new frontiers and possibilities await...

No Compromises (January 4th 2262)

Lieutenant Corwin received word from the EA destroyer *Acheron* that it had arrived with his 'package'. The package was Captain Elizabeth Lochley, newly arrived commander of Babylon 5. When Corwin greeted her, she expressed some surprise at the rest of the Command Staff not being there. Corwin explained to her that life on Babylon 5 was often 'hectic', something Lochley took as a sign of a poorly run station. She was confident that as long as you do not go looking for trouble, you will do fine. As a brawl broke out behind them, Corwin informed her that on Babylon 5, 'trouble comes looking for us'.

On Mars, at a tube station, an unidentified man had captured a Ranger, who was bound to a chair as his captor walked around, taunting him. His captor assured him that this was nothing personal, that a message needed to be sent to Babylon 5 and Rangers were for sending messages. The Ranger was then shot, point-blank, and a placard hung around his neck: 'Special Delivery for Babylon 5'.

Delenn awoke to find a newly-bearded President Sheridan preparing breakfast. He was hoping to share breakfast with her, but she had to leave early to meet with the new Gaim ambassador. They had been alternating quarters for a while now, with mixed success – both having a need for a workspace of their own. They hoped that when the Alliance moves to its permanent headquarters on Minbar, they would have a true home they could share, but for now, this was the best they could do. Delenn was also puzzled over Sheridan's habit of leaving socks to dry in the shower. He explained to her that, in his early training, he had a tough-as-nails DI who always did his own laundry. Why? Because he felt that, so long as he had something to come back to – such as socks to be washed – he would never die. The only people who died in battle, he said, were those who had nothing left to do.

Sheridan was interrupted by a call telling him that Lochley had been brought on board. He explained to Delenn that Lochley was Ivanova's replacement and would take over command of Babylon 5.

Outside of the station, the body of the slain Ranger floated by in a survival bubble.

Sheridan met with Lochley and acknowledged the receipt of orders from Earthdome. Lochley was to have full control over the running of Babylon 5. She noted that Babylon 5 was to remain an independent, free state, which prompted her to ask why Sheridan was bringing in someone from

EarthForce to run it. He explained to her that it was partially a matter of tradition but, more importantly, it was a means of rebuilding the bridges burnt during the civil war.

President Sheridan had asked for Lochley personally, because she had shown her ability to defuse potentially explosive situations without the use of violence, but she also knew when force was required and how to use it. Lochley accepted this but she also wanted it known she would not be a mere mouthpiece or flunky for Sheridan and the Alliance. She insisted that she have the authority to run the station her way, or she would not run it at all. Sheridan agreed and made it clear that while he would control all political decisions, or decisions on behalf of the Alliance, she would have full control of Babylon 5.

As Lochley travelled to Bay 3, a tall, longhaired man silently watched her pass by.

Meanwhile, Mr Garibaldi was instructing Zack in security protocols for the upcoming inauguration, instructions Zack was bearing with ill grace. He wanted to be left alone to handle things, but Garibaldi was having none of it. He felt he owed Sheridan security, at the very least. Garibaldi mentioned several key points, including checking the identity of the new Gaim ambassador. As they walked away, they passed the man who killed the Ranger. The killer, who had been sitting quietly at a bar, finished his drink and walked away.

In Bay 3, Corwin stood over a sheeted corpse. He told Lochley that the dead man was found in a stasis bubble, but that he did not die from exposure to space. A security

guard handed Lochley the 'Special Delivery' placard hung around the man's neck.

In Sheridan's quarter, the comm screen came to life. A flicker of random characters resolved into a message: 'Dear Mr President, as of this date, you are officially a dead man. Have a nice day.'

Lochley was eating in a restaurant and reviewing paperwork when the omnipresent background din faded to nearly nothing. She looked up to see a longhaired man approaching. He seated himself and gave his name as Byron. He asked her to meet him in Brown 3 in two hours, and to come alone. He claimed it was important, saying, 'My people are coming.' The noise of the crowd suddenly flooded back and when Lochley turned to look at Byron again, he had vanished.

Before she could ponder this further, Dr Franklin called her to MedLab. He had finished the autopsy.

G'Kar was in his quarters, working on what would become the Book of G'Kar. As he struggled desperately to find the right words, his concentration was shattered by the insistent chiming of the door. Finally, he gave in and opened it, admitting President Sheridan. Sheridan had an important task for G'Kar – writing the oath of office and, more importantly, the declaration of principles for the new Alliance. He had heard many Narn quoting from the incipient Book of G'Kar and had always been impressed with G'Kar's skill with language from their encounters in the council chambers. G'Kar was flattered by this and after a token bit of humility, leaped on the opportunity, vowing that 'the words and I will be locked in mortal combat until one of us surrenders'.

Down in MedLab, Lochley was meeting with Dr Franklin. He informed her that the Ranger was killed by a close-range PPG shot, probably no less than a week ago. However, the body had only been in space for a few hours so he was killed elsewhere and then dumped where he was sure to be found. Furthermore, the shot was perfect – exactly where it needed to be to cause instantaneous death. Whoever killed the Ranger knew what he was doing. Lochley wondered if this might be related to the inauguration, but before



they could discuss this further she was called away to her appointment with Byron.

In Brown Sector, Lochley walked down a seemingly empty corridor. She turned, suddenly, to see Byron standing behind her. Simultaneously, a group of people appeared in front of her, emerging from the corridor junction ahead. They were mostly young and dressed alike, though not identically, in clothes of black and grey.

Lochley turned back to Byron, who thanked her for coming. She told him she did it because she knew he was a strong telepath, that he was potentially dangerous... and that she had not come alone. Security surged out, surrounding the telepaths, who reacted with calm, as if they had expected this (and being telepaths, they almost certainly did). They allowed themselves to be searched and, when they came up clean, Lochley asked Byron what he wanted.

'A place to call home,' he replied.

He and his comrades were rogue telepaths, blips, fleeing the Corps. They disdained the violence of the resistance, so they were on their own. They had been living as nomads, travelling from world to world. The independent Babylon 5 offered them a place to call home, a colony for them and others like them, until they could find a true world to call their own.

Lochley noted that this was a lot to ask. Byron replied, 'Where is it written that all our dreams must be small ones?' He claimed to speak for the current group and for those yet to come, and he introduced the small band to Lochley. One among them was young man named Simon, or 'Special Simon', who did not speak, not even telepathically. When he was asked to say 'Hello' to Captain Lochley, he sent her a series of images of flowers. This meant, according to Byron, that he liked her.

Lochley asked that the telepaths go to MedLab for examination. Byron agreed and, before leaving, told Lochley that he and his followers would earn their keep. All they wanted was a place to call home.

Delenn was finishing up her meeting with the Gaim ambassador. She noted the great help the Gaim had been during the Shadow War and promised to offer further assistance if it was required. The Gaim thanked her and departed, unaware it was being followed.

Sheridan returned to his quarters to find the death threat, followed by a voice message. The message detailed leaders who had died in office following wars – Lincoln after

the American Civil War, Roosevelt during World War II, Kioshi after the War of the Shining Star. The threat was evident – Sheridan, like those other wartime Presidents, would have to 'pay' for 'his war' and, furthermore, 'the one thing you can't stop is the lone gunman determined to kill you, even if he gets killed in the process'.

An attempt to trace the source of the transmission was unsuccessful. The logs had been altered and the message could not be traced. As Sheridan listened to the message, the man who sent it was stalking and killing the Gaim ambassador, easily overriding the security protocols.

Meanwhile, Franklin was examining the telepaths, noting their generally poor health. A life on the run did not afford them much opportunity to eat well or pay attention to minor medical problems. He also examined Simon and determined that Simon *could* speak physically, he just chose not to. The only hint Simon ever gave as to his trauma was an image of himself, holding a young girl, both surrounded by flames. Franklin promised to provide medication for the telepaths. For an instant, his attention was diverted by a call to an emergency meeting; when he looked up again, the telepaths had quietly vanished.

At the emergency meeting, Garibaldi insisted on postponing the ceremony, to the general agreement of all. He noted that the assassin had killed once and knew the B5 systems well enough to bypass normal security. Sheridan, however, opposed any delay, unwilling to live life inside a bubble. Both Londo and Delenn, veterans of political manoeuvring, cautioned him against this, but he was adamant. Leaders, he said, should be among the people who put them in power, not walled off from them. He claimed no security system was perfect, that the would-be assassin was right when he said no one could stop a lone gunman willing to die to kill his target – so why live in a prison when it will not keep you safe?

The Command Staff were not willing to accept this argument – but Lochley was. She rebuked the rest of those assembled, claiming that while Sheridan was concerned with the political goals of the Alliance, they merely wished to protect their friend. Between her authority as head of B5 and Sheridan's as President of the Alliance, it was settled – the inauguration would go on as planned.

Garibaldi confronted Lochley outside and demanded an explanation. She replied he had no right to even be in the meeting – he was a civilian and had no authority. Garibaldi's claim that he had years of experience on Babylon 5 was dismissed by Lochley, who noted that he quit and, as far as she was concerned, that was the end of it.



Simon had been crawling the tunnels of B5 and was drawn to the sound of music playing. The music was coming from a music box and, through a vent, Simon watched the assassin modify the Gaim encounter suit. Simon saw the assassins plan, his dream of killing Sheridan, unfold in his mind. Shocked and stunned, Simon moved suddenly, making a noise that alerted the killer, who grabbed a PPG and emptied it into the ceiling, firing at random. His attacks were rewarded with a slow trickle of blood from the ventilation shaft but, unsure if he had killed or merely wounded the spy, he grabbed his equipment and left the room.

In the garden area near the observation rotunda, the gathering had begun. G'Kar had completed the Oath of Office. Security was very visible, much more than Sheridan wanted, but still less than Garibaldi would have liked. Garibaldi, however, was not present – he was in his office, trying to track down the killer. The voiceprints did not match any human or alien criminal records. As Garibaldi listened to the recorded threat, he realised that two of three presidents named were killed by soldiers who had fought for the other side. A quick run on EarthForce records revealed a match – the killer was Major John Clemens, a Clark loyalist who ran the brutal prison colony on Beta 7 and who was responsible for the death and torture of dissidents sent there by Clark.

Clemens, in his Gaim disguise, had penetrated security and had a clear shot at Sheridan. As he prepared to fire, Simon emerged from the tunnel system and managed to shout a warning just in time. Two guards intercepted the lethal blast, saving Sheridan's life. As his plans collapsed,

Clemens, who had doffed his helmet, grabbed a hostage and fled.

Zack ordered the station sealed. Sheridan insisted on going on with the ceremony, determined, above all, to send the message that 'We will not be intimidated'.

Franklin pronounced Simon dead. Zack was certain that the killer would be caught; the station was locked down and there was nowhere to run. However, Clemens was also a skilled starfury pilot, and he managed to enter a launch bay, knock out the pilot and steal his ship. This triggered a

security alert and Garibaldi rushed from his office to deal with it.

The inauguration ceremony, performed by G'Kar, was underway in the observation rotunda. The book upon which President Sheridan was to swear the Oath of Office was composed of the first page of every sacred text of every species that had joined the Alliance, symbolising the fact the President was to speak with one voice, but for many beings. As the ceremony progressed, Clemens' starfury moved into firing position. He gave the assembled beings a chance to leave, except, of course, for Sheridan. Most took the opportunity and fled, but Delenn and G'Kar remained, willing to die by Sheridan's side. Clemens declared that Sheridan had ruined his life, taken everything from him. He did not care if killing Sheridan ended the Alliance or not; all that mattered was that he died. Before he could fire, though, Garibaldi's starfury succeeded in attaching a grapple to Clemens'. The shots went wild, and Clemens' ship was sent spinning. The Babylon 5 defence grid targeted it, fired, and that was that.

Unwilling to risk further delays, G'Kar greatly abbreviated the ceremony. 'Put your hand on the book and say 'I do.' Sheridan did. G'Kar declared it done and went to look for the buffet.

Later, Sheridan met with Byron. The President offered his condolences for the loss of Simon and also offered the telepaths a home on Babylon 5 – declaring that this was a political decision, thus overriding Lochley's earlier refusal.

Lochley was to face one more frustration on her first day. A smirking Garibaldi informed her that, while he was not comfortable rejoining EarthForce, he *was* going to be the head of covert operations for the Alliance. Before leaving, he asked Lochley what side she was on during the war. She replied that she was on the side of Earth – weren't they all?

Typical Byronite

This statistic block can be used for most of Byron's followers. Adding a level or two of Lurker, Soldier, or Telepath can differentiate them if needed.

2nd Level Human Telepath (P5)/1st Level Lurker

Hit Points: 10

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 11 (+1 Dex)

Attacks: +1 melee or +2 ranged

Special Qualities: Lurker's Knowledge

Saves: Fort +3, Reflex +1, Will +3

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

Skills: Bluff +2, Climb +5, Computer Use +6, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +5, Hide +3, Knowledge (telepathy) +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Telepathy +6, Spot +6, Survival +3

Feats: Alertness, Gestalt, Run

Telepathic Abilities: Accidental Scan, Communication, Mind Shield, Sense Telepathy, Warning

Major John Clemens

2nd Level Human Soldier/4th Level Officer (fleet)/1st Level Agent

Hit Points: 22

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 14

Attacks: +6 melee, +7 ranged

Special Qualities: Security Systems, Rallying Cry, Weapons Training

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +6

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14

Skills: Computer Use +15, Disguise +6, Intimidate +9, Listen +5, Move Silently +2, Pilot +4, Sense Motive +5, Technical (Electronic) +10, Technical (Spacecraft Operation) +6

Feats: Data Access, Hobby (Computer Use), Improved Initiative, Spacecraft Proficiency, Skill Focus (Computer Use), Weapon Proficiency (Vehicle Weapons), Weapon Proficiency (Spaceship Weapons)

John Clemens was a loyal EarthForce officer whose loyalty overshadowed his conscience. He was noted by his

superiors as being willing to do almost anything to serve and never questioning the ethics or legalities of what he was told to do. These traits led to him being assigned as head of the infamous New Siberia penal colony on Beta-7 when Clark turned it from a holding pen for the most violent and disruptive criminals in the Alliance to a dumping ground for political 'dissidents'. A few years in this post quickly burned away what few traces of conscience Clemens might have possessed and when Clark fell, Clemens knew that what awaited him was capture, trial and death of personality for his war crimes. With death certain, he chose to take Sheridan with him when he went.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Clemens is not the only one who hates Sheridan – not by a long shot! There were many who supported Clark, some because he promised them great personal power, others because they believed in his cause. There will be many who think that *Sheridan* has committed a coup, deposing the rightful President of EarthGov and that the current government is illegitimate and must be deposed. Many of these people will be still active in EarthForce and in civilian branches of government.

By the same token, there are also those with an axe to grind against the former supporters of the regime. A victim of Clark's oppression (or a relative of same) might come seeking revenge against someone who was a Clark agent or supporter. If such a person is not actually guilty of war crimes (and most were not, just as only a handful of Nazis ever went to Nuremberg), they are entitled to the full protection of the law. Characters who work for, or support, the Alliance may be put into a situation where they must protect a former enemy against someone who was a former ally.

Clemens was capable of breaking into the security of the Babylon 5 station, even though Garibaldi and the rest of the Command Staff had changed access codes when they first broke away from Earth. This implies that there are deep agents within the station. Alternatively, when Mr Garibaldi was captured, Psi Corps could have ripped anything from his mind they wanted. Lochley had worked with Clemens previously and said he was a good soldier – is it possible he, like Garibaldi, was programmed by Psi Corps? They may have used the information gleaned from Garibaldi's mind about B5 security protocols to create an assassin, then set up deep programming to make him think it was his own idea. It is possible Bester might not have been involved with this; other top agents might want revenge on Sheridan for his interference with Psi Corps' dealings with

the Shadows and it would be almost impossible to trace a disgruntled, and very dead, soldier back to them.

‘Which side were you on?’ This is a key question in the post civil war era. The winners write the history books, but the war is not history yet. It is still a fresh, bleeding wound. There is significant mutual suspicion and hostility among those who fought on different sides but most now work together. Regardless of which side (or sides) the Players took, they can be forced to work with those who chose the other. Starfury pilots who were loyal to Clark might be transferred to Babylon 5 to replace pilots lost in the war. Following a change of command, officers or crew of a starship might have to deal with new faces, some of whom were shooting at them just a few months before.

Aliens and the War: It should also be noted that while a civil war is of tremendous importance to the nation fighting it, it is much less meaningful to other worlds. To most non-humans, the Earth civil war was nothing more than an inconvenience, disrupting trade. They will not care which side a particular human fought on, except as idle curiosity.

War Criminals: An entire campaign can be based around hunting down suspected or accused war criminals. Following the collapse of the Clark Regime, there were many guilty of atrocities. While reconciliation meant that not every crewman on a ship guilty of firing on civilian targets would be held accountable, the Command Staff would be. Some turned themselves in, a great many others fled. Many had contacts and connections and were able to forge false identicards or get transit out of Earth Alliance space. Large bounties have been posted on these individuals, but only if captured alive.



The Very Long Night of Londo Mollari (January 10th 2262)

Sheridan and Delenn were sleeping in her quarters when a BabCom message came in. A religious-caste Minbari named Ruell greeted her and said he called at once to see if he could help her with her problem. He promised to send as many replacements as she would like. Delenn responded with confusion – replacements for what? For who? She had sent no message! Ruell was startled and explained that a message was sent in her name, requesting a replacement for Lennier, who had arranged to return home to Minbar – permanently.

Delenn, perhaps for the first time in her life, was shocked into silence.

Meanwhile, in a loading bay, Londo was fuming at Vir, but quickly turned his wrath towards Zack, who had committed the unpardonable offence of impounding a bottle of fine brevari, which would be ruined by being stored in an improper environment. Zack replied that there was a three day impound due to recent infestations. Vir tried to negotiate and called Zack away to speak to him privately. As they talked, Londo helped himself to the waiting drink. He took a surreptitious swallow, then collapsed to the ground. Londo and Zack rushed to his aid, Zack calling in an emergency medical team.

Londo was rushed to MedLab, alive but in a critical condition. Franklin asked Vir if he was sure Londo was poisoned and Vir said that he was. Security claimed the bottle in order to analyse it. Vir watched, helplessly, as the medical team struggled to keep Londo alive.

Meanwhile, in her quarters, Delenn paced. Lennier entered the room, slightly nervous, but proceeded to recite Delenn's schedule as if nothing was out of the ordinary. Delenn confronted him about his departure and revealed Ruell had called her. Lennier had planned to tell her later and attempted to duck the issue of why he was leaving in the first place. Finally, as Delenn pushed, he confessed he felt that Delenn no longer needed

him. She denied this, but Lennier persisted, claiming that with Sheridan as Delenn's 'other half', he no longer felt comfortable being there. Lennier had decided to join the Rangers, partially due to feelings of loss over Marcus and partially due to a desire to earn Delenn's respect, to become more the sort of man she could love. Though he does not say the last explicitly, it is painfully obvious that is what he means.

Garibaldi found Vir in the Zocalo and told him the news from MedLab. It was bad. Londo was in critical condition. Vir reacted with frustration and anger, ranting at those around him. Garibaldi interrupted his tirade to tell him that Londo was *not* poisoned, news that Vir had trouble accepting, but Garibaldi continued. The drink tested out fine; Londo has suffered a heart attack in his left heart. Vir's face fell, the anger and frustration of a moment ago turning to cold fear in an instant.

In MedLab, Franklin lectured Sheridan on Centauri physiology. Had the attack been in the right heart, it would have been easy, but the left heart is a mass of fine veins, nearly impossible to operate on. All Franklin could do was thin his blood, but that would not be enough. Londo's arterial system was a mess, shut down from overwhelming anxiety and stress. Londo was not responding to any treatment. A call to Centauri Prime helped supply an artificial heart, but it would be three days before it arrived and Londo had, at most, a day to survive.

Sheridan and Delenn stood by Londo's bedside, somewhat in shock at seeing Londo being quiet and motionless. The vibrancy that defined Londo was gone; all that was left was an immobile shell. Sheridan asked her if he could do anything about Lennier and Delenn's sharp negative reply took him aback. This made him wonder if it was his fault Delenn admitted that it was and that there was nothing which could be done. Lennier must follow the calling of his heart. Eager to change the subject, she returned to the question of Londo. Sheridan said that Londo's fate was up to Londo – if he could make it through the night, he would probably live. If not...

Meanwhile, Londo was dreaming. Delenn's voice, wishing him luck, carried into his subconscious. In his mind, he



was wandering through Downbelow, past silent, scurrying, figures. He asked about Delenn, claiming to have heard her voice, but no one would help him. As he looked for her, he wandered into a dark passage. Here a hooded Delenn, garbed as a fortune-teller, greeted him and bade him sit.

The dream-Delenn laid out tarot cards for Londo. Londo asked if this was his future, but was told it was his past. Delenn gathered the cards, stacking them. As Londo watched, blood flowed from the deck. Delenn looked up, told him he was dying and asked him if he wanted to live. Londo truly did not know if he did or not. This death would spite fate, would deny the dream of his death which had haunted him for 20 years.

Delenn repeated the question. Londo hesitated, then, finally, said yes – only to be told that was not enough. Delenn showed him another card and asked if he could see it. He could not – there was too much blood. If wanting to live was not enough, he asked, what was? 'A word', Delenn replied... and then veiled herself again, ignoring his demands for more information. Indeed, she said nothing more, just pointed to a ventilation grid set into the floor. Londo knelt at it and opened it, revealing a pulsing, red surface beneath – his heart.

Suddenly, he was in darkness again... but not alone. G'Kar was there, watching him, though Londo did not see him...

Back in reality, Vir sat forlornly at a bar in the Zocalo. Lennier came to join him; both had heard of the others situation and both agreed it had been 'one hell of a day'...

no, it had been 'a hell of a life'. After some slight banter, Lennier said farewell to his opposite number.

In his dream state, Londo wandered the oddly empty halls of the station. Even the Zocalo was abandoned, though the bar was well stocked, or so it seemed. Londo began to speak, seemingly to himself... but then Sheridan was there. Londo asked him if he ever got used to being dead. Sheridan said he was not dead long, but he did not like it. Londo recounted what he called his many deaths, the way he had become dead in the eyes of others, the way he died inside when status forced him to leave his first wife. He looked for a much-needed drink, only to find all of the bottles at the bar were empty. 'The metaphor is getting a bit thick, don't you think?' he asked Sheridan. Sheridan did not reply as the two of them walked away from the bar, continuing to talk. Ultimately, Londo said that he did not wish to die and Sheridan told him that he must turn around. Londo claimed that he could not. He knew who was behind him – the shadowed figure of G'Kar – and he could not turn and face that, even to save his own life. Sheridan departed from Londo's dream in a blaze of white light... and in the real world, Londo was dying.

Franklin managed to stabilise him, but the prognosis was not good. Unable to sleep, he chose to sit by Londo's side, where he was joined by Vir in what they both feared would be a death watch.

In the dreamworld, Londo was flat out on his back, in darkness, pleading to the Great Maker that he did not want to die, not like this. Vir was there, looking down at him, telling him not to die. Londo sadly replied he had no choice in the matter, as, in the real world, medical alerts began to sound. In the dream, Vir told Londo that the problem was with him, that his heart could not bear the weight of his conscience. Londo denied there was anything wrong with his conscience and Vir said that if that was so... turn around. G'Kar is there, waiting, but Londo refuses to turn. He said that he had seen his death in a dream, that he was an old man. This dream will pass and he will live. Vir sadly informed him that prophecy is just a guess that comes true – otherwise, it is only a metaphor. If Londo does not turn, he will die. Londo leaped from excuse to excuse, knowing what he would see if he turned. He claimed his death now would be for the best, but Vir denied this. Vir would miss him and Londo was forced to admit he would miss Vir. Londo steels himself... and turns.

Outside the dream, Londo's body was convulsing as Franklin called for a trauma team... and G'Kar entered MedLab, watching impassively as his often-enemy, sometime-ally began to die.

Within Londo's mind, he was back on Centauri Prime, in the Imperial Palace, along with G'Kar, who was sitting on the throne... a throne Londo claimed not to want. G'Kar mocked this and listed the fears which might drive Londo to disown the crown. Then he ended by saying that Londo did not *deserve* the throne and that he knew it. G'Kar recounted the destruction of the Narn homeworld, the mass driver bombings, the deaths of the innocent and Londo refused to take responsibility. He claimed he did not know about it, it was Refa's plan... that he said...

'You. Said. Nothing,' replied G'Kar, his voice a thin whisper of pain and rage. Through all the destruction, Londo said nothing, nothing to stop it or allay it, even though he could. All he did was watch.

Londo turned away, unable to face G'Kar, but G'Kar insisted he look... and as Londo did, the scene changed to Cartagia's private torture chamber, where G'Kar was brutally whipped. Londo looked around, remembering the torture, remembering that he was there, watching and G'Kar reminded Londo again: 'You. Said. Nothing.'

Londo claimed that it would not have changed if he said anything – they would not have stopped. G'Kar raged back at him that it did not matter if they would have listened, Londo had an obligation to speak. Londo said that he could not speak. That, explained G'Kar, was why Londo did not deserve to be Emperor... did not deserve to live. Within his dream, Londo staggered, clutching his heart and G'Kar said he was only moments from the grave. Only one word was required to save his life, but Londo refused to say it.

Londo then found himself in rags, chained to the pillar. G'Kar, dressed as Cartagia, sat upon the throne, while a second Londo, accompanied by Vir, stood by his side.

Dream and reality merged more closely. Within the dream, Londo was struck with the electro-whip while G'Kar counted off the strokes; in reality, electrical defibrillation was applied. As the whipping approached its 40th stroke in the dream, Londo screamed as G'Kar had and, outside, Franklin said he had stabilised, for the time being.

Within the dream, G'Kar mocked Londo. 'Perhaps,' he said, 'I am a delusion... perhaps I'm a telepathic remnant... or perhaps, I am your conscience.' He claimed that Londo had not changed. Londo was not sorry for what he did... he was just sorry he got caught, sorry that he almost destroyed his homeworld. Londo tearfully stated he had never apologised for anything in his life. The struggle between pride and life consumed him. Finally, life won. He broke

down, and pleaded that he was sorry and smashed a pane of glass covering the pulsing red heart.

Outside, Londo had stabilised. His left heart was beginning to work normally again. His eyes opened as consciousness returned, and the first thing he saw was G'Kar – the real G'Kar, who had been watching him. 'I'm sorry...' said Londo. G'Kar was shocked at first, then broke into an almost tearful smile.

The next day, Londo was back to his usual cantankerous self, at least on the surface. Vir tried to tell him to change his diet and cut back on the stress, which Londo said would not be possible, whether he stayed on Babylon 5 or returned home. Before Vir left though, Londo asked if he had ever heard of an old Centauri legend, one in which a spirit trapped in an unworthy body could choose to kill the body, so the spirit would be free to move on. Vir said that he had and that the person involved would either be transformed or die. However, this only happened if the spirit was a very noble one and the person it was trapped inside was utterly vile. Vir was very familiar with the tale, but Londo had never heard of it before.

Lennier was sitting in the departure lounge, awaiting his ship. The ship arrived and a group of Rangers marched out in formation to usher him aboard. After a brief conversation with Delenn, he departed.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

This is a very unusual episode from a gaming perspective. There is no action per se, no advancement of the arc of the series – but it is an intensely personal episode which sets two of the series' oldest characters off on new paths. Londo is set on the path to redemption, although the road will be a long and twisting one... and Lennier is set on the path to betrayal. An ignoble character begins to rise and a noble one begins to fall, though this is not immediately evident.

Plot Hooks

Delenn does not gain another full-time assistant, but it is impossible that she would be able to perform all of her duties without some help. Therefore, it is logical that she would have ad-hoc assistance when she needed it. Both human or Minbari characters could be called in, if they had the appropriate skills and connections, to help her diplomatic and political tasks. It is unlikely they would be trusted with work of extreme sensitivity or importance, unless Delenn had worked with them before, but this could be an opportunity to earn her trust or to be involved, tangentially, with many of the ongoing tasks of getting the Alliance up and running.

Symbolic Visions

Using this sort of imagery in a game is difficult, unless the Players are prepared for it. However, symbolic visions of this sort make several appearances in Babylon 5 – Sheridan's dream aboard the Streib ship or G'Kar's vision when using Dust. The following are some ideas and guidelines for this sort of scenario.

Only one character should be fully himself. The other Players, while appearing as their characters, will play other roles within the vision, but those roles should be logical, given their relationship to the main character. Rivals or enemies represent fears, hatreds, or aspects of the character's own personality that he despises. Those whom the character sees as intelligent or insightful should appear as guides or counsellors.

Combat in a dream state does not follow normal rules, for the character is fighting symbols, not actual beings. Generally, things in the dream will either be indestructible (no weapon damage will harm them, they must be fled from or dealt with), trivial to kill (any attack will dispel them instantly) or killable only by some special means (such as understanding their true nature and what they represent).

The location of a dream shifts rapidly. It should consist of places the character knows well that are subtly or dramatically altered. The character's quarters, filled with someone else's furniture and clothing. The Babylon 5 station, but deserted and abandoned. The world of Nar'Shal, but vibrant and alive, as it was before the Centauri came.

The dream should have a purpose – to tell the character something, or to force the character to confront an issue or to make the character choose between two paths. The dream does not end until this purpose is achieved. One way to do this is to set up the dream in specific stages, with an 'exit condition' for each stage. When the character does what is required in one stage, the dream shifts – usually with a change in scenery and characters – to the next.

The Paragon of Animals (February 12th 2262)

The council chambers were in an uproar. The former League worlds were demanding that the Alliance make good its promises of technological advances, even as President Sheridan insisted they were moving as fast as they could. Delenn said that they would be made available once the various governments had signed the Declaration of Principles, something most of those assembled were very

reluctant to do, claiming it was an attempt to 'legislate morality'. The Drazi ambassador, in particular, rebuked both Londo and G'Kar. He stated that his people did not enslave or exploit other races and they did not need anyone to teach them morality. As this debate went on, Mr Garibaldi watched from the shadows, even as the assembled delegates filed out in disgust.

Later, Sheridan filled Garibaldi in. Most of the inner circle were angry and frustrated, with Londo going so far as to advocate scrapping the whole thing. Garibaldi, to Sheridan's dismay, had to agree. Sheridan, however, stuck to his principles – the Alliance was not just about hardware, it was about principle and that had to be clear from the start. Garibaldi, however, said it was time to stop being soft – the other races only respected strength. Sheridan said that was the problem, but Garibaldi continued. The Alliance was fragile, there would be time in the future for high ideals and lofty goals, but now all that mattered was keeping it together and that would require force. He left Sheridan alone, feeling somewhat despondent.

Elsewhere, on the world of Enphil, death was raining from the sky, death in the form of Raiders blasting the lush fields and farms below. The Enphili huddled in their shelters, listening to the weapons fire outside. One man entered the shelter, battered but smiling. He announced that a Ranger had come and that he would take world to the Alliance. The Alliance was going to save them, *must* save them, for they had no other hope...

Back on Babylon 5, the inner circle of the Alliance was meeting. The conditions under which each race would join were debated and discussed. G'Kar though, was distracted, as he continued modifying the Declaration, in the hopes he could make it suitable to all of the various races.

Garibaldi then broached the telepath issue. After Sheridan granted them permission to stay, they promised to earn their keep. Garibaldi had an idea. The information from the Rangers was good... but not perfect. There was one means of information gathering they were still not using. Sheridan saw the direction the conversation was heading and reminded Garibaldi that there were rules about that; 'Psi Corps

rules'. Garibaldi shot back and reminded the assembly that none of them were avid supporters of the Corps and furthermore, every other race except the Narn used telepaths militarily. Why not, then, use them? Babylon 5 had given them food, shelter and clothing – it was time for them to pay back. Sheridan was unconvinced; he wanted to keep them as allies in the event of a likely telepath war, but Garibaldi persisted, finally winning Sheridan over. He reluctantly gave Garibaldi permission to ask if the telepaths would be willing. If this turned out to be the case, then the debate on whether or not to use them could continue.

The telepaths, in their makeshift quarters in Brown Sector, watched silently as Garibaldi approached and ignored him when he entered and began looking for Byron. They refused to speak to him, but signalled among themselves, bringing out Byron, who responded, curtly, 'No', before Garibaldi could even speak. Byron informed him that he had already heard it all – the question, the expected reply, the counter-arguments. Garibaldi questioned Byron's lack of respect for privacy and Byron replied he did nothing – it was an effort to shut out thoughts. All he was doing, in effect, was not wearing earplugs. Garibaldi had been practically shouting his entire plan and all of the possible counter-moves the whole time he was approaching. As a final coup, he pointed out Garibaldi was there to ask the telepaths to scan *others* without their permission – he had quite surrendered the moral high ground.

Garibaldi reminded Byron that they had promised to work on the station, to which Byron replied that, yes, they would – they would do many things, but they would not take orders from mundanes or work for organisations which



treated telepaths as mere tools, to be used when needed and cast aside when no longer useful.

Outside, the jumpgate flared and a badly damaged White Star fell though, bearing an equally badly damaged Ranger, the one from Enphili. As the Ranger lay dying in MedLab, Delenn and Franklin spoke. Franklin assured Delenn that he had done everything he could, but that was not likely to be enough. Furthermore, he did not know what the Ranger had come to tell them – the ship's computers were wiped and the Ranger had not said anything meaningful before entering a coma. Delenn could not accept this – she would not allow his death to be meaningless, to allow those who did this to escape justice. She demanded a telepath.

Lyta arrived and stood by the dying Ranger. She gently touched him, entered his mind and saw the desperate faces of the Enphili. She heard the Enphili leader speak, telling of how the Raiders came ten years before, blasting their cities, imprisoning their leaders and conducting twice-yearly raids. This year, the Enphili decided to fight – by giving away everything the Raiders would have stolen. The response to this was violent retribution. In twelve days, the Raiders would come in force to scour the world; if the Alliance did not help in that time the Enphili would be wiped out.

Then, Lyta looked up. She was in MedLab and the Ranger was standing before her, even as his body lay on the table. He knew he was dying and he pleaded with her to help the Enphili, to let his death have meaning. A gateway appeared, filled with light and the Ranger walked into it, his soul departing as his body finally failed. Franklin pronounced him dead.

Delenn was having dinner with Sheridan as she filled him in on the details of what Lyta had learned. The world was on its own unless the Alliance helped, which meant a firefight, which meant Garibaldi was right. Londo and G'Kar agreed they must intervene and the Declaration of Principles obliged them to. Sheridan was also frustrated that they were going in blind – whoever was bombing the Enphili had destroyed a White Star, which implied superior numbers or firepower or, as Delenn noted, *both*. Delenn also recommended that, to make the point clearly, they should send every White Star they could spare, a show of force and determination which no one could miss or mistake. Terror, she said, is a form of communication.

Sheridan ordered out the fleet, declaring that the new Alliance was going to 'find the neighbourhood bully and pick a fight'.

Sheridan met with the Drazl ambassador to keep him informed about the action, since the fleet would be moving to a region bordering Drazl space and also to

The Declaration of Principles

The Universe speaks in many languages, but only one voice.
The language is not Narn or Human or Centauri or Gaim or Minbari.

It speaks in the language of hope. It speaks in the language of trust.
It speaks in the language of strength and the language of compassion.
It is the language of the heart and the language of the soul.
But always it is the same voice.

It is the voice of our ancestors speaking through us.
And the voice of our inheritors waiting to be born.
It is the small, still voice that says we are One.

No matter the blood, no matter the skin,
No matter the world, no matter the star,
We are One.
No matter the pain, no matter the darkness,
No matter the loss, no matter the fear.
We are One.

Here, gathered together in common cause
We agree to recognise this singular truth and this singular rule:
That we must be kind to one another.

Because each voice enriches us and ennobles us,
And each voice lost diminishes us.
We are the voice of the universe, the soul of creation,
The fire that will light the way to a better future.

We are One.

ask the Drazzi for help. The Drazzi promised to speak to his government and ask for help. As he left, he was observed by Byron.

Lyta sat alone in the Zocalo. Garibaldi sat himself down and, without preamble, offered Lyta a job. Lyta sarcastically replied that she was fine and thanks for asking. She had been inside someone's mind when he died, a traumatic and life-rending experience, and one she could not easily share with another. She had endured this twice; other telepaths who had done it four or five times were virtually shells. She was deeply shaken, reliving the experience as she spoke about it, but she forced herself to return to the present and ask Garibaldi what he wanted from her. He explained to her about his plans to use telepaths for intelligence purposes and about his failure to recruit Byron's people. Lyta saw no problem with this and walked away. Garibaldi followed her, asked her to do it for Sheridan and Delenn, for their belief in the new Alliance. Reluctantly, she agreed to try.

G'Kar was sitting alone in the darkened council chambers, looking at a pile of papers. He gathered them and left.

Meanwhile, Sheridan was experiencing a sleepless night, so he was not too put out when the door chimed. After he opened the door, he found no one there, but a scroll had been laid down outside. Before he could read it, Delenn awoke and joined him. The scroll contained the final version of G'Kar's Declaration of Principles.

Lyta approached Byron's people, with her telepathic blocks up. She began to explain that Garibaldi had sent her, but before she could speak, Byron interrupted her. He mocked her willingness to obey orders without question, but it was not done with cruelty, but with the intent of getting her to think about her willingness to submit, to do what she was told. As she stormed out, he asked her if it occurred to her that she deserved better. Evidently, it had, as she returned to hear more of what he had to say. He explained that he and his followers were here because they were tired of being ordered around, especially by those who could neither conceive nor perceive their world. He insisted that telepaths must help one another, must care for one another. He asked her if it mattered *to her* that he helped her friend, and, because it did, he would do it. For her, not for him. He would provide two telepaths who would be willing to work for the Alliance. Lyta thanked him and began to leave, but he stopped her. He told her that he had seen, in the Drazzi ambassador's mind, that the White Stars were heading into a trap. Soon, they would all be destroyed and the Enphili would all be dead.

Lyta brought this information to Sheridan. The Drazzi were funding raiders all along their border, giving them ships and

supplies and getting, in return, a share of the plunder. This kept the border worlds beaten, the Drazzi economy rich and the Drazzi's scaled hands arguably free of innocent blood. Before the Drazzi fleet ambushes the White Stars, though, they are going to wipe out the Enphili. Sheridan ordered Garibaldi to contact the fleet and to have them leave the rendezvous and go all out for the Enphili homeworld. Sheridan thanked Lyta as he left, leaving her somewhat stunned.

On Enphili, the raiders' fighters were moving in to attack but before they could do so, the sky blossomed into a hundred whorls of blue radiance, as the White Star fleet emerged to defend the planet.

Later, in the Council chambers, Sheridan had called a meeting and was especially glad the Drazzi ambassador was there. Sheridan called the assembled ambassadors to the main desk. He played a data crystal that showed the Enphili homeworld and described the world's history. The Drazzi ambassador was curious about the odd white dots surrounding Enphili and was told they were White Stars that had taken out the Raiders and were now in defensive positions. The Drazzi responded in confusion, thinking the ships were waiting at a rendezvous? He was informed that there were rumours a larger force might be coming to attack the Enphili and that the Raiders were dispatched before they could send a distress call. The Alliance, Sheridan said, was going to fulfil another one of its promises – that the enemy of one is the enemy of all. The assembled ambassadors would soon get a chance to see the White Star fleet in action. The Drazzi ambassador pleaded a need to call his government, desperate to escape to warn his fleet...and Sheridan pounced. He told the assembled ambassadors that it was a *Drazzi* fleet coming to attack Enphili, that the Drazzi had been exploiting and terrorising the border worlds. The Drazzi ambassador begged to be allowed to warn his fleet. Sheridan relented and permitted it, but then turned to the other ambassadors. They had asked why they had to sign a declaration of principles? *That* was why! He handed out G'Kar's scrolls and one by one, the ambassadors signed. Lyta, outside, looked on.

After the conference, Sheridan consulted with Delenn. He reluctantly admitted that the Enphili were saved thanks to telepaths and that, therefore, Mr Garibaldi was correct. He would approve Garibaldi's plan to use telepaths for intelligence, albeit reluctantly. He felt this was a slippery slope and a lack of caution could prove dangerous.

In Brown Sector, Lyta approached Byron and asked to hear more about his ideas.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Enphili is a world badly scarred from a decade of raiding – its infrastructure is in ruins, its fields are burned, many of its people, especially its leaders, are dead. Merely stopping the raids will not restore the planet. A wide variety of scenarios can be based around trying to get the Enphili back on their feet, such as attempting to rebuild a shattered dam which is located in the midst of a predator-filled jungle, trying to convince Brakiri grain merchants to sell much-needed seed grain at a discount, recovering religious or cultural artefacts stolen from the planet or quelling an incipient civil war, as the unity between factions brought about by a common enemy begins to break down.

How many other worlds are there like Enphili, worlds off the beaten path, with native, but low-tech, civilisations beaten or abused by their neighbours? Ranger characters, or others, might make a point of checking League world archives for references to inhabited but ‘unimportant’ worlds near to their borders and investigate the conditions of them.

If any of the characters are human telepaths who live on, or often visit, Babylon 5, they will encounter Byron and his followers. If the characters are loyal to the Corps, their reaction will be initially hostile – this could be manifested as picking a fight directly, alerting Psi Corps or trying to undermine their group or their group’s support structure. For example, most accept every horror story about the Corps without question – but there was propaganda and lies on all sides and it is possible some of the tales of Psi Corps’ malice are exaggerated or out-and-out false. Furthermore, it is possible a Psi Corps character might know some of Byron’s telepaths – or Byron himself.

A non-Psi Corps character may be highly sympathetic to Byron’s cause or he may reject Byron’s pacifism. The character may also consider how he has been treated by the other characters. Is he treated as a person, or as a ‘magic user’, a set of useful ‘spells’ to be hauled out when needed? Does he have an identity other than ‘we need a telepath in our group’? If not, the character may well find Byron’s call very appealing. In a world of telepaths, being a telepath does not distinguish you – you are judged by your other qualities.

Non-human telepaths will also react to Byron. Unlike human telepaths, there has been no large-scale persecution of Centauri, Minbari or other race’s teeps. Most of them have been well integrated into their societies. Byron speaks of ‘telepaths’ as a race apart, but his philosophy really only applies to humans. Or does it? The same problems

which led to the formation of the Psi Corps on Earth must have occurred among other races. Regardless of the social structures used to protect alien telepaths, they are still controlled – and thus, some telepaths must surely chafe under them. Could ‘Byronism’ spread to Centauri, Drazi, Brakiri or even Minbari telepaths?

A View From The Gallery (March 10th 2262)

Somewhere in hyperspace, a lone probe floated. A fleet of ships came upon it, fired and moved on, leaving the debris to drift eternally in the red void.

Meanwhile, Lochley slept, until a message awoke her, a message she was clearly expecting. ‘They’ had destroyed a long-range probe. Lochley headed to C&C and alerted her crew that the advance wing of a hostile alien force, one that had already attacked the Gaim and others, was heading their way. The invaders were looking for easy targets and, one way or another, Babylon 5 was going to be hard. Lochley ordered civilian traffic shut down and a lifepod prepared for Sheridan and Delenn – even though she knew getting them onto it would be a Herculean task. Cobra fighters were launched, red alert was sounded and Babylon 5 prepared for attack. Even as the station moved to war, though, life continued – two maintenance personnel, Bo and Mack, watched the pilots rushing to their stations with resigned weariness. It was the third alert this month and they would be the ones cleaning up the mess when it was all done...

As fighters swarmed outside the station and Lochley argued with Sheridan, Bo worked on the floor and Mack worked on a control panel. Lochley tried to persuade Sheridan to link up to the lifepod, arguing he would do the same if their positions were reversed. Half-heartedly, Sheridan agreed.

As they left, Bo and Mack discussed what they had overheard, expressing their admiration for Sheridan as a ‘down in the trenches’ leader. Bo also wondered about the function of the machine that he was operating. It did not clean the floor, nor did it have any other apparent function. Nonetheless, he was supposed to run it over the floor. Confronted with this imponderable mystery, they broke for lunch. Bo had salami; Mack was trying spoo – which he immediately traded for the salami. Their lunchtime banter was interrupted by a call for maintenance to MedLab and C&C.

In MedLab, Bo was asked to correct a problem with the isolab computer as Franklin briefed his staff on the upcoming battle. Half to himself, he wished he knew what kind of life forms might be coming, so he could prepare. Bo asked him why – after all, they were the enemy. Who cares if they died? Franklin explained that when his father had been captured during a military engagement, he had survived only because a doctor there chose to treat him, even though he was on the other side. That moment defined Franklin's life and gave him a goal – he would be a doctor and he would treat anyone in need.

Meanwhile, in C&C, Mack was trying to fix the secondary-targeting console, even as enemy ships poured through the jumpgate. The starfuries intercepted as the defence grid fired, surrounding the station with flashes of light and fire. The aliens attempted to access the station's defence codes; Lochley scrambled them to prevent this. An enemy ship fled the battle, out of range of the primary weapons system. Before it could escape entirely, however, Mack brought the secondaries on-line and the ship was destroyed.

The initial scouting assault had been destroyed, but Lochley knew there was more to follow. In preparation she went to speak to Garibaldi.

As this was going on, Mack rejoined Bo, where the latter was repairing some electronics inside the flooring. Mack praised Lochley's performance in combat, praise that was coldly received by Bo, who claimed rumour had it she was on the wrong side during the civil war. Mack had little patience for rumours; there were all sorts of them flying around when Ivanova left and none were true. The pair proceeded to their next job, in Brown sector, where they were joined in the lift by a bickering Lochley and Garibaldi. The former was dressing down the latter for not securing the computer systems properly; Garibaldi rebutted that he could not think of every possible question or contingency, but Lochley noted that it was his *job* to think of those questions.

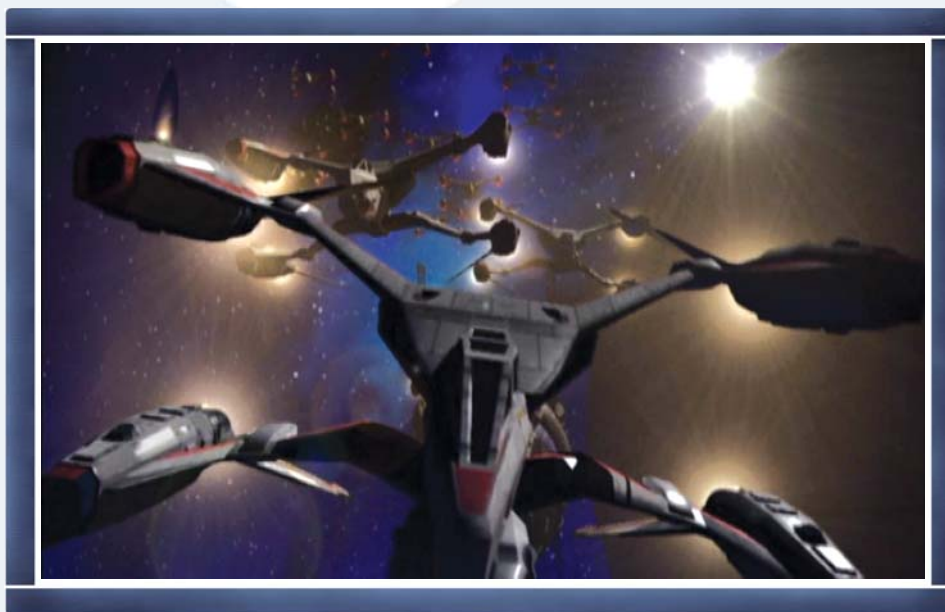
In hyperspace, a larger fleet gathered.

Bo and Mack were in Downbelow, one of their least-favourite assignments. The lurkers kept tapping the piping for fresh water and not resealing

them, leading to extensive water damage, which had shorted out a comm unit. No sooner had the pair finished that, then they were called to the Sanctuary, to prepare it for an upcoming ceremony. As they left, Lochley's face appeared on the newly fixed screen. She urged all civilians to stay in quarters, as the first wing was coming through.

In the sanctuary, Mack and Bo watched the fight. Flashes of blue and red, the fires of life and death, filled the room with colour. Bo told Mack that red was one of theirs – green, the aliens. The aliens had a different atmosphere, so they exploded in different colours. He had heard this from a pilot, and it suddenly occurred to him he could be out there now, that the most recent red flash might have been him. Each flare of red meant a life lost, all that person ever was or ever could be, vanished forever. As Mack considered this, a blue whorl opened and the cavalry – in the form of a single White Star – arrived. However, this was not the end of the fight. The aliens had launched breaching pods and, even as the civilian personnel scrambled for the shelters, the station was under assault.

Bo and Mack were on a lift, trying to get to safety, when it shorted out and stopped. Bo overrode the controls – only to find the doors opening into a maelstrom of weapons fire, as the invaders and security fought a running battle in the hallway outside. The two workers could do nothing but take shelter behind some crates as a brutal conflict flared around them... well, at least not until Bo delivered a roundhouse to the jaw of one invader and Mack grabbed a fallen guard's plasma rifle and opened fire himself. This brought a shouted rebuke from Zack, who ordered them to get out of there. Not being fools, they did so.



They proceeded along the darkened corridors until they came upon Byron and his followers, sitting calmly only a few hundred feet from the violence. Byron said it was safe here and suggested the two stay here until the fighting was over. In his hands, Byron held one of the invader's crimson helmets, while Mack demonstrated that Shakespeare was not one of his favourite playwrights. The other telepaths passed the helmet around in wonderment, while Byron expounded on death. Bo and Mack realised they were among telepaths, the ones Sheridan had allowed to live onboard B5. As Mack tried to convince them to be in a shelter, an invader came upon them. As one, the telepaths focused on his mind and slowly he wandered off, ignoring them. This demonstration of power unnerved the two and they began to wander off, when the station shuddered, taking a strong hit. Mack worried that the hull might breach, but Bo dismissed this, confident the B5 pilots, 'the best in the sector', could handle it. He only wished he was out there with them. Byron was intrigued by this, and asked if he sincerely meant it – almost certainly a politeness, as he was quite capable of sensing sincerity or insincerity. Bo replied that he did, that it mattered to him. Byron concentrated... and Bo was in a starfury, flying in the heart of the battle, surrounded by the fires of life and death. Then he returned, and there was a sudden look of understanding between him and Byron. Byron had granted him a sincere wish, if only for a moment and he appreciated it.

In the shelters, Londo was complaining, more upset about the inconvenience than the possibility of imminent death. As Londo paced, G'Kar wrote, occasionally responding to Londo's tirades with simple facts. This calm also annoyed Londo, and he mentioned this. G'Kar explained that the Centauri habit of bombing Narn cities to discourage rebellion meant he had spent much of his childhood in shelters, listening to the sounds of violence, so this was nothing new to him. As Londo walked off, G'Kar asked where he had spent *his* childhood – playing, learning table manners? Londo turned and looked back at him, a sad, distant expression on his face. He was never a child, he said. He had always had responsibilities – duty, honour, family. G'Kar looked at Londo with understanding and, perhaps, pity. G'Kar, eventually left the shelters, but Londo...



Londo was always trapped inside. The two walked off, still bickering slightly, as Mack wondered (sarcastically) how long they had been married.

Then the second wave of enemies emerged, striking hard and fast. A portion of the station was damaged and erupted in flames, even as maintenance bots scrambled to repair the breach and contain the fire, but they could not do it alone. Bo and Mack were called from the shelter to Red Sector in order to help stop the spread of the fire. As they made their way there, they were stopped by President Sheridan and charged with escorting DeLenn, against her wishes, to a lifepod. As they led her off, she asked their names. This question surprised them, since they were rarely given any respect, only orders. She asked them a second question – if she were in a pod and the pod was damaged from the inside, what would happen? The pod, they replied, would be destroyed in any of a variety of ways. She then informed that, if she were placed in a lifepod and forced to watch all she loved be destroyed, the pod *would* suffer just such a fate. Therefore, since she was not going to be safe there, she might as well be unsafe *here*, alongside her husband and in her home.

She walked away and, as she did, the station shook once more. It did not feel like a hit though and when the two workers got to a portal, they saw the White Star fleet had arrived and the aliens were being routed. As the battle ended, the two contemplated their place in the world. Bo felt that, sometimes, this was all too big for him, but then he considered that if Londo, Sheridan, DeLenn and the rest could handle it, then so could he. The fighting had ended and they returned to work – and there was a lot to do. Makeshift triage centres lined the halls, airlocks

were damaged, the area around the station was filled with hazardous debris and it all fell to maintenance to clean it up. In Bay 4, which had become a temporary morgue, Franklin silently catalogued the bodies and the two realised that there were a few grim tasks that were placed on shoulders other than theirs.

Days later, cleanup and repair continued. C&C was a mess, but enough worked that Corwin could report there was no sign of the alien fleet – they had moved on to other, softer targets and were leaving this region of space alone.

Bo and Mack continued with their lives...

Bo

9th Level Human Worker

Hit Points: 24

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 14 (Reflex +4)

Attacks: +4 melee or +5 ranged

Special Qualities: Blue Collar, Salary Increase

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +4

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 10

Skills: Computer Use +12, Concentrate +7, Knowledge (the Babylon 5 station) +12, Profession (Technician) +20, Technical (electronics) +15, Technical (engineering) +15, Technical (mechanical) +6

Feats: Great Fortitude, Nerves of Steel, Skill Focus (Technical (electronics)), Skill Focus (Profession (technician)), Skill Focus (Technical (engineering))

Mack

8th Level Human Worker

Hit Points: 22

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 12 (Reflex +2)

Attacks: +5 melee or +4 ranged

Special Qualities: Blue Collar, Salary Increase

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +3

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 10

Skills: Computer Use +11, Concentrate +6, Knowledge (the Babylon 5 station) +11, Profession (technician) +16, Technical (electronics) +14, Technical (engineering) +14, Technical (mechanical) +5

Feats: Great Fortitude, Nerves of Steel, Skill Focus (Technical (electronics)), Skill Focus (Technical (engineering))

Evacuation Protocol

It is not possible to realistically evacuate the quarter of a million people who live and work on Babylon 5. Such a procedure would take days under optimal circumstances and few crises worthy of evacuation come with a seven-day advance notice. However, 'stay in your quarters and pray to whatever deities you believe in' is, likewise, unacceptable as a response to an attack on the station.

In the event of a crisis, a small percentage of the population – primarily diplomats, critically ill patients and some medical personnel – are ordered to lifepods that are rigged to launch either on a signal from C&C or upon cessation of such signals for any period of time (indicating a major breakdown in station communications, a sign of incipient disaster). Lifepods also monitor the fusion reactors, hull integrity, and so on, and will launch themselves if the AI determines the station is on the verge of collapse.

The rest of the population must go to shelters. There are dozens of these placed throughout the station, mostly in the upper levels near to the central core and farthest from the outer hull. Visually, the shelters are indistinguishable from any other large rooms in the station, but they are constructed differently. The walls have DR 23 and 85 hit points and each shelter can form an airtight seal. The interior of each shelter contains life support equipment that can provide 48 hours of air and heat and a small tachyon beacon that can transmit a universal distress call. The intent is for at least some shelters to survive the break-up of the station. The odds of any given shelter surviving depends on what forces are damaging the station, but EarthForce projections give chances ranging from 1 in 10 to 1 in 1,000.

Even if the station is not in danger of destruction, the shelters are shielded from hull breaches, intense radiation and so on, and are difficult for boarding parties to breach.

Security will do all it can to escort civilians to shelters, but it will not perform door-to-door searches or use force to convince the recalcitrant to get below.

Taking advantage of the abandoned status of merchant areas during a crisis is deemed looting and carries with it a 1500 credit fine and 30 days in the brig, in addition to the penalties associated with stealing. If there are any security officers to spare, some will be assigned to the Zocalo and other commercial regions to guard against this activity.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Who were the aliens? They came through Gaim space, but they do not seem to belong to any known species. They are most likely to have come from an uncharted world anti-spinward, beyond the Ipsha and the Llort, or they may have come from coreward and then turned, which would put them beyond the Tal-Kona'sha. Tracing them back to their home systems could be the basis for a campaign, as could discovering the motives for their attack and possibly defusing it. Many races have introduced themselves to the galaxy through violence, only to eventually become true members of the galactic community. Others, of course, have not. Such a campaign would take the Players beyond the known galaxy, allowing them to see a part of space which is undocumented, allowing a Games Master a mostly-fresh canvas on which to draw, but which is still tied back to the core setting.

While deactivating the jump gate entirely would not be feasible, it should have been possible to set it to not respond to the aliens codes. Indeed, it can be presumed this was done and did not work. Combine this with the fact that the aliens could scan Babylon 5's computers, and it seems likely that, whoever or whatever they are, they have allies among the other races. Perhaps they can appear to be humanoid or survive some time in an oxygen atmosphere and have infiltrated galactic society. Perhaps they, like the Shadows, work through agents. Perhaps they have taken captives, like the Streib, and have used telepaths to rip secrets from their mind. No matter the explanation, when it becomes clear to EarthGov and the Alliance that an enemy has some source of 'inside knowledge', finding and terminating that source will become paramount.

The style of this episode can make an interesting change of pace from a typical campaign. A Games Master may wish, for a single session, to have the Players take on different characters – workers, primarily, and run a scenario in which these new characters interact with the Players normal characters, with said characters being played as Non-Player Character. This can work only if the Games Master knows the characters well and the Players trust him to play them correctly.

Players tend to assume most things will work, unless there has been deliberate sabotage. However, things break down all the time, from a comm unit in one's quarters to the release mechanism on a starfury launcher. Having Bo and Mack (or similar 'everyman' characters) show up to deal with such petty things is a good way to introduce new, recurring, Non-Player Characters. Such workers often hear useful things or know about places on the station that others might not – an unused room in Downbelow, an access shaft where the security monitors have shorted out or a stockpile of dried spoo forgotten in an abandoned storage area.

Learning Curve (April 15th 2262)

On Minbar, a group of Ranger recruits was undergoing training. One of them, Rastenn, was having difficulty concentrating on meditation while the teacher spoke. His trainer, Turval replied that anyone could meditate in silence, but to meditate in noise was a challenge. Rastenn, showing his warrior caste background, disagreed – to him, a challenge meant combat, not sitting and thinking. His teacher commented that he had, at least, mastered sitting. This discourse was interrupted by the arrival of Durhan, another elder Ranger, who informed Turval that Delenn wished a report on progress and that the two of them were to go to her. As the two old friends bantered, another Ranger trainee named Tannier laughed, drawing their attention. Rastenn and Tannier were picked by Turval to go with him to Babylon 5 or 'the home of peace', as Tannier put it.



Meanwhile on Babylon 5, peace, at least in Downbelow, was in very short supply. A thug named Trace and his cronies killed a man who was late on payments, leaving the body where others could find it.

The Minbari flyer arrived at Babylon 5. The four Rangers – the two old and the two young – met with Delenn.

At the same time, Garibaldi met with Zack over breakfast. Zack told him that Byron would be sending over candidates. When Lochley entered, looking for a place to eat, Garibaldi called her over to join them. The conversation moved to a current shortage of fighters and Garibaldi suggested that Lochley try to requisition some more – was she not on good terms with the administration? Lochley denied this, even as Zack sensed trouble brewing and tried to change the subject. Garibaldi was insistent and kept drilling, demanding to know which side Lochley was on during the war. Their conversation had attracted the attention of others, who were listening in. Pushed to the wall, Lochley admitted she was on the side which believed the job of the military was to obey orders, that she did not take up arms against her own government. She proceeded to lecture Garibaldi on the role of a soldier, to protect those under her command and to not attempt to figure out the ethical structure of the universe. She believed, she said, in honour, loyalty and duty and exited the room to the sounds of applause.

Still fuming, she entered a lift, where she met Captain Sheridan and told him of her recent spat. Sheridan offered to talk to Garibaldi, to smooth things out, but Lochley declined. If she could not handle him, she should not be there. She also commented that she never thought she would meet a *second* man as strong-willed as she was.

In Downbelow, Zack and several other officers were examining Trace's handiwork. They managed to ID the victim – he arrived on B5 two weeks earlier, ran up debts at the casino, and disappeared. Zack looked at the body again. He noted that a PPG blast takes a few seconds to cauterise the wound so there should have been blood on the deck – but there was not. He was killed somewhere else, then moved here, probably as a warning. He asked the crowd if they had seen or heard anything but was met with an awkward silence. He pointed out this was the third murder in this style and there would be more unless the lurkers helped security. No one came forward; they all looked away or shuffled off.

Trace and his cronies watched him go. They decided Zack was too smart and too charismatic and he needed to be taken out. One of the gang tried to talk Trace out of this, telling him that going after Zack would raise Trace's profile

too high, that the gang could run things profitably so long as they kept their heads down. Trace refused to listen, claiming he could deal with it, just as he had on Beta 7.

Delenn met with the two senior Rangers. They had expanded their training program considerably, with Drazi, Yolu, Abbai and even Pak'ma'ra joining the Rangers. The latter were giving them considerable trouble. According to Rastenn, they had no idea what to do with the Pak'ma'ra. Delenn said that since no one ever noticed Pak'ma'ra, they would make excellent couriers, as they could blend into the background. This was seen as an excellent idea and training in infiltration would begin immediately.

Turval dismissed the two younger Rangers and he and Delenn talked and walked. He expressed sorrow over her loss, but said it was not unexpected... which brought him to the subject of Lennier. Like Marcus, Lennier pushed himself too hard, seemingly trying to prove something.

Garibaldi met with two telepaths, who silently listened to his instructions, while communicating with each other telepathically. After they left, Garibaldi asked Zack to pull Lochley's file, something Zack was loath to do. Garibaldi felt something was missing. Why did Sheridan trust Lochley when she was on the wrong side during the war? Before the conversation could continue, Zack was interrupted by a call, which reported a tip on the current wave of Downbelow murders. The putative informant checked out and Zack prepared to meet with her in Brown 6. As he left, he promised Garibaldi he would think about his request.

In Downbelow, the two young Rangers wandered, as Trace and his gang laid a trap. The young woman who called Zack took her payoff and prepared to flee the station, until she learned Zack was being led to the slaughter. She refused to go along with this and planned to warn him, so Trace had one of his men grab her and drag her off to be killed. The Rangers heard her scream. Tannier ran to aid her, while the warrior Rastenn urged him not to get involved. Tannier leapt into the fray, but his skills were not up to the task. He was shot and knocked down. Trace decided that if their plan was to leave a message, the Ranger would be as good a postman as Zack. The gang descended on Tannier's prone body, beating him savagely.

Alerted to the crisis, Delenn and the two older Rangers came to MedLab, where Franklin informed them that, if he were human, he would be dead. As it was, he was badly wounded. Turval told Franklin to see that he lived, to make him well enough to stand, then turned to Delenn and spoke one word: Mora'Dum. Franklin did not know

that word. Delenn tells him it means 'The Application of Terror'.

Delenn met with Lochley. Lochley was pleased to hear that Tannier would pull through – that meant they could get a description of his attackers and send security to work. Delenn, however, had other plans. She was there to tell Lochley to keep security back – this was now an Anla'Shok matter and that they would handle it. The Earth Constitution backed the independent status of the Rangers, placing them above local security and police. Lochley had no choice; the Rangers would take care of their own. During their conversation, Lochley expressed confusion that Sheridan would permit this, claiming that 'It's not like him'. This surprised Delenn, as it bespoke a deeper connection between Lochley and Sheridan than she had not been aware of.

In MedLab, Rastenn was standing over Tannier, watching him. Tannier was improving, slightly, but was still in poor shape. Turval said that Tannier was healing... and he wondered what would be required to heal Rastenn. Tannier's body was injured, but Rastenn's injuries were of the spirit. Rastenn was guilty over abandoning Tannier. He had done so out of fear – not out of fear of dying, but out of fear of getting involved in something not worthy of him, something trivial or stupid. He was afraid of dying without reason. He wished his death to have meaning. Turval told him that meaning is not independent – we *create* the meaning in our lives. To be a Ranger was to do the right thing because it was the right thing, not because it was grand or important, but because it was *right*. Tannier understood this; Rastenn did not. Turval told Rastenn his death would have meaning if it came when he was in the fullest pursuit of his heart.

Tannier was capable of standing and, with that, he was deemed fit to face his terror – to face those who had harmed him. He had to take back the power that those who harmed him now had over him. The other Rangers would go with him, to bring him to face his terror, but they would not aid him. Win or lose, the fight had to be his.

Zack was clearing the entire area of security personnel, following the Captain's orders. Within Trace's lair, one



of his lieutenants reported the news that security had abandoned the region. Trace cheered at this, for a moment and then the lights flared red and the station's computer announced the region was sealed. Trace sent two of his men out to search. They had called in to say they had found nothing, when their transmission was cut off with a strangled scream. Trace decided to head topside. The gang moved, cautiously, into the crimson flare that illuminated the station. One by one, each gang member was pulled away and, in the confusion, Trace opened fire on his own men. He was alone and scared and began to run.

In a small storage room, he was surrounded by the Rangers and herded into the centre of a circle, where he faced Tannier, who was holding a fighting pike. He tossed a second pike to Trace. The other Rangers told Trace that they would not interfere – the fight was to be between him and Tannier. If he was not trained in the pike, well, he did not let Tannier's lack of training stop him earlier. If he wished to leave, it would be through Tannier.

Trace claimed to have rights; Tannier responded with a pike blow to the head. Seeing no other option, Trace grabbed the second pike and tried defending himself, even as Turval lectured on the psychology of bullies and Durhan criticised Trace's inept fighting style – even the Pak'ma'ra were better fighters! Trace dropped the pike and resorted to fists; Tannier responded in kind, beating Trace to the ground. When the fight was over, Tannier felt only pity for Trace. He would never be more than this. The lesson in terror had ended and Trace was turned over to security.

As the Rangers prepared to leave, they asked Delenn to return to Minbar with them. She declined, but said she and

Sheridan would be there soon. Garibaldi watched them go on a security monitor, and commented that the Minbari were incapable of walking away from a fight – where humans would retreat and get reinforcements, the Minbari simply continued to attack until they could not fight any more. Zack left the room, leaving Garibaldi alone.

In their quarters, Delenn queried Sheridan as to what Lochley meant when she said his actions were 'not like him'. He told her, but she was not pleased with the answer.

Trace

6th Level Human Lurker

Hit Points: 15

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 13 (+3 Reflex)

Attacks: +6 melee or +5 ranged

Special Qualities: Lurker's Knowledge, Survivor's Luck, Multi-Skilled

Saves: Fort +7, Reflex +3, Will +2

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 15

Skills: Appraise +7, Bluff +11, Gather Information +11, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (Underworld) +8, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Profession (crimelord) +7, Search +4, Sense Motive +8, Spot +2, Survival +7

Feats: Alertness, Contact, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Weapon Focus (PPG)

Trace is a nobody who thinks he is a somebody. He has parlayed a bit of muscle, a smidgen of brains and a threatening sneer into a position of crude leadership in the underworld. He holds on only so long as no one summons the courage to challenge him – then he flees. He is skilled at setting up an aura of menace, so that Players may believe him to be much more than he is – they may hear rumours of a great and powerful crime boss who rules all Downbelow (or the underworld on any minor, out-of-the-way colony), but the man behind the curtain is just a jumped up thug with delusions of grandeur, not even worth wasting a PPG charge on.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Ranger Training: This has so many possibilities that it is hard to know where to begin. Rangers are expected to go anywhere and do anything, working alone or in small teams, working covertly or openly... they are perfect for gaming. While *The Rangers* will contain full information on this, non-Ranger characters can still be involved. A Ranger-in-training is a valuable contact for a Player and Players may

be contacted by such characters for various tasks. Such a trainee might not even reveal that they *are* a Ranger – a task assigned to a trainee could be to secure information or find a person without giving away their affiliation. Rangers are, after all, associated with the law and there are many individuals with an instinctive and well-justified aversion to legal authority.

In Downbelow, there is still a power vacuum and there has been for quite some time, since N'Grath vanished late in 2258. Nature abhors a vacuum, so there must be some reason why it has taken years for a new boss to arise. B5 Security is good, but not perfect. It may be that some of the galaxy's established criminal syndicates do not want anyone to 'claim' Babylon 5 as their own; it is too useful for too many different criminal organisations to allow any one gang to control it all. Ironically, leaving Babylon 5 'uncontrolled' makes it more useful to organised crime, not less. Such a possibility opens up scenario ideas – Players could be hired to break up a gang which is beginning to solidify a hold on B5, only to discover their employers are the Mafia, the Yakuza, the Talkiano or the Zhra'van.

Alien Rangers: The Pak'ma'ra are not the only aliens whose psychology or physiology makes them less suitable for general Ranger training. The aquatic Abbai, the furious Drazi or the insectoid Gaim are all very different from humans and Minbari (which the training regime was designed for) but all are part of the Alliance and may wish to, or be required to, participate in the Ranger program. An interesting party of characters could be formed from such 'unorthodox Rangers'.

Ranger Independence: The authority of the Rangers to override local police and security is interesting. It is clearly not limited only to times when Rangers are acting on Alliance business; they are a truly independent force. This can offer a lot of opportunities for conflict. If Rangers are sent to pursue a subject, local law enforcement may be inclined to hinder, not aid them. This can be due to malice or a genuine conflict of interest. For example, a team of Rangers might be pursuing a small-time smuggler who has information on a case important to the Alliance. However, this smuggler is considered a valuable informant by the security forces on Batain, who consider his crimes minor but his information invaluable.

It is also possible, though rare, for Rangers to be corrupt. No matter how good the training, psych profiles, telepath scans or whatever other means are used, some bad eggs will end up in the basket. The ability to cover up corrupt and illegal activities from investigation by pleading 'Ranger Independence' will allow some fairly advanced criminal

operations to be set up, especially if they are kept well out of sight.

Fighter shortage: Babylon 5 is missing a lot of fighters, and those it has have been shot up a lot. This places some pressure on pilots, who may be reluctant to fly in smaller-than-standard patrols or on ships that are being held together with bailing wire. Even loyal EarthForce officers will grumble when asked to risk their lives unnecessarily. There are several possibilities here:

Not so routine: Routine anti-raider sweeps become much less effective if only half the normal complement of fighters are assigned to them. The raiders know this as well and are taking advantage of the smaller patrols to step up their activities. Outnumbered, but advanced Starfuries against more numerous, but primitive, Delta-Vs can be an interesting match-up.

I'm supposed to sit where?: In order to shore up the defences of Babylon 5 while waiting for new ships to be allocated by EarthGov, a number of alien races have contributed a small number of their own fighters. Human pilots are being trained on Drazi, Brakiri and Narn craft. This imposes a -2 on all Pilot checks for the first month of flying, until the pilots are familiar with the craft. On the other hand, knowing something about alien control systems and configurations is a useful skill to have in a chaotic universe, especially for characters, who often find themselves in unexpected situations.

Strange Relations (May 20th 2262)

Following Sheridan's revelation, Delenn made a point of seeking out Lochley as she walked to her office. Delenn said she knew why John had chosen her – apart from the official reasons. Lochley apologised – she wished Sheridan had given her advance warning. Delenn claimed that it was not John's fault, that she had forced the issue and furthermore, that she understood the reason and supported it. As the two parted, they were unaware that Mr Garibaldi was watching and listening...

Outside the station, a massive Centauri cruiser disgorged a shuttle. Londo watched it, dispassionately, from the observation rotunda, as Zack approached to tell him, unnecessarily, that his ship had arrived. Londo was not pleased – this was, to him, 'the end of the line'. The Centauri Regent was ill, slowly dying, and Londo knew that soon, the Centaurum would appoint him as Emperor. From that point on, he would nevermore come to Babylon 5, except for rare visits of state. This saddened him, something he did not expect. Zack's attempt to cheer him by reminding him of his upcoming Emperor-hood failed; Londo would be the second Emperor Mollari and that Emperor too had 'ended badly'. He told Zack that though he did not know how or when, he knew that here was where it would begin to go badly, for all of them.

In C&C, Corwin urged a transport to reactivate its autopilot. The transport had undergone systems failure and was drifting off-course inside the bay. Even as Corwin demanded that they *not* activate their thrusters, they did so, sending their ship careening into the bay doors, destroying the ship and damaging the bay.



Shortly, space outside the Babylon station was crowded with transports awaiting docking, even as Captain Lochley inspected the damage. The maintenance crew, after a combination of bribery and blackmail, claimed the station would be operational again in eleven hours.

In MedLab, Lyta rummaged frantically through supplies, until she was discovered by Franklin. She explained that she was searching for supplies

for the telepaths. Even though Franklin was willing to treat them in MedLab, Lyta explained that many had undergone gruesome treatment at the hands of Psi Corps doctors, making them uncomfortable with medical facilities and, furthermore, they wished to be self-sufficient. When Franklin pointed out that sending someone to steal supplies was not exactly self-sufficiency, Lyta replied that, firstly, the material she was taking was already earmarked for charity cases and secondly, she was not sent – she acted on her own. Franklin's attitude softened as he saw she believed in their cause.

Byron beamed when Lyta entered the telepath's domain in Downbelow, as pleased to see her as he was to see the supplies she had 'found'. Most of the medicines were distributed to the group, but Lyta insisted that Byron begin taking some vitamins – he was pushing himself too hard and was on the verge of becoming sick. When she asked when the last time he had even slept was, he told her that it was three, maybe four... lifetimes ago. In that life, he was a coppersmith, and he slept beside a river, cradled in his love's arms. When he awoke, she was gone and in her place was a willow – a tree deceptively strong, one with deep roots, which will bend but not break and which promises shelter to those who rest beneath it. Lyta was his willow and all of them had found shelter in her kindness.

Lyta blushed from the praise but proved Byron correct in his assessment of her strength by turning the topic back to the matter at hand – Byron's health. Before he could deflect this with yet another obscure parable, fear rushed through the assembled telepaths. As one, they were aware of it... something was coming, something dark and bleak.

Bester had arrived at the landing bay.

Garibaldi was in Zack's office when a guard came in, looking for the Chief. The guard knew he should not tell Garibaldi what was up, but did so anyway – Bester was on board, to see the Captain. Garibaldi raced to Lochley's office, to find the two of them sharing tea and an ancient joke. Memories flooded back as Garibaldi saw him, memories of imprisonment, torture, brainwashing, being set against his closest allies. Bester smiled at him, with the warmth of an icicle and the sincerity of a Brakiri. Garibaldi lunged for his nemesis, only to be stopped by an impressive punch from Lochley, who called in security and had him hauled to the brig.

In MedLab, Delenn and G'Kar confronted Franklin, who was confused at their request – that he delegate many of his responsibilities to his staff, to free up his schedule for 'other things'. The new Alliance would increase interaction between species, which was good... and also the possibility

of cross-species infection, which was bad. Sadly, the medical literature on cross-species disease was very poor and that would be where Franklin came in. He has been pegged to assemble the definitive work on the topic, a job he eagerly accepted.

Delenn and G'Kar departed, but G'Kar was still troubled. He felt his own contributions to the Alliance were not enough. Delenn warned him that such complaints are often answered in surprising ways.

Lochley entered Sheridan's office and strode towards him, even as he turned to her. Both radiated barely-contained fury – his at her handling of Garibaldi, hers at Garibaldi's actions. He reminded her of Bester's history with Garibaldi, of the fact that Bester nearly got both him and Garibaldi killed. Lochley waited until Sheridan had finished, then presented her side. He had given the telepaths sanctuary, against her wishes, but had *not* granted them immunity from prosecution. They were wanted on a variety of charges and Lochley was still loyal to EarthGov which, under the terms of the Alliance, could conduct its internal affairs as it saw fit. Furthermore, despite the past problems Sheridan and Garibaldi had with Bester, Lochley had to judge on what he did on her watch. She also reminded Sheridan that if she judged people solely on what was written in reports about them, she would have shot him on sight as a traitor to Earth.

Sheridan was trapped. Every possible course of action was bad – to kick Bester out would be to void Alliance laws for his own convenience, while to let him stay would be to make his promise to the telepaths meaningless. He insisted, finally, that Bester not be allowed to have them, but left it up to Lochley to find a reason which would withstand scrutiny.

Outside, the Centauri liner waited, its captain growing impatient. It had to leave – Mollari would have to wait for the next one, most probably not something he would mind. As the liner locked on to the Centauri beacon, the ship was wracked with explosions. In an instant, it was vaporised.

Sometime later, Corwin debriefed Lochley on the disaster – explosives had been laced through the hull and a detonator was tied to the navigation system. Once the liner was bound for Centauri Prime... boom! The explosives were Centauri in origin – someone set this up back in the Republic. Furthermore, since Babylon 5 was the liner's last stop before heading home, it meant the target would be boarding from the station – and that, in turn, meant Londo was the most likely target. Lochley left to talk with him, to see if he could narrow the list of his enemies

down to a few thousand. Before she left, though, Zack pleaded Garibaldi's case, a pleading which was undermined when Lochley, reviewing security records, realised that her personal file had been pulled by... Mr Garibaldi.

In Downbelow, Bester and his bloodhound unit encountered Lyta. Bester had been informed that Lyta had been associating with Byron and his followers. The bloodhounds scanned the area, but they and Bester found nothing... indeed, nothing at all, which tipped Bester off. There would be background static from the mundanes, at the very least. Bester had forgotten how strong Lyta had become, forgotten she could jam him and the others. He smirked and told his troops to check the hall. As one approached, Lyta forced him back with what seemed to be a telekinetic blow. Bester admired her talent, and wondered if it was really telekinesis or just the telepathic illusion of a slap. As he spoke, he also studied her – she was growing tired, flushed – this ability was draining. He wondered how long she could continue, how many she could take down. Lyta dared him to try, noting that, since the ability was new to her, she might 'accidentally' pop a blood vessel in someone's brain. Bester backed down, for the moment. He would be back soon with security guards, more than enough to overwhelm her. This time, he had allies in the chain of command.

As Bester departed, Byron emerged from the shadows and Lyta nearly collapsed in his arms, exhausted from her show of bravado. She pleaded with him to scatter his people throughout the station – she knew a few likely safe spots. He kissed her and the two ran off.

In the brig, Lochley confronted Garibaldi, and demanded that they settle this once and for all. Garibaldi had been riding her since she came on board and she wanted to know why. She dismissed his first two concerns and also told him that if he wanted to pursue his 'hobby' of bashing Bester, he could do it where she could not see it. Then, Garibaldi brought up his third point – why did Sheridan pick her? Lochley knew he was looking for something dark – some blackmail she had over him or some secret agenda. She clearly pitied his inability to imagine any other reason. She was here, she said, as a symbol – someone from the other side, to show unity. He also wanted someone he could trust to stand up to him, but not to backstab him. Someone he knew. Someone he was once... married to. The marriage had only lasted three months, as neither was willing to let the other one be in charge, even for a while. So he knew and trusted her and she knew and trusted him and so... there she was.

She was also getting a call from Zack, asking her what to do about Bester's request for guards. The request came through proper channels so there was no good reason to deny it. Bester would get the guards he needed, but no more.

Throughout the station, one by one, the fleeing telepaths were captured. Lyta watched, helplessly, as they were booked, enduring the smirks of Bester and the sad resignation of Zack. Filled with sadness, frustration and rage, she was pulled away by a telepathic call from Byron. He wished to say goodbye. With his people being captured, his place was with them; even the likelihood of death at the hands of Psi Corps did not dissuade him. Byron berated himself for his folly, folly in trusting others, folly in offering hope. Lyta offered to hide and protect Byron, but he refused. He had to stay with his people, but Lyta could carry his legacy onwards.

At a general staff meeting, Zack reported on Bester's progress. Almost all of them had been captured and the rest soon would be. Lochley looked for some excuse to prevent the transfer of prisoners but she had none. Bester and his lackeys had played absolutely clean. Lochley dismissed the staff. Franklin met with her quickly to discuss his new duties for the Alliance and to clear this with her. As he explained his



work on cross-species infection, Lochley had a sudden idea and went off to 'go ruin somebody's day'.

In Brown Sector, too eager Bloodhounds charged Byron, who waited passively.

Delenn met G'Kar in her quarters. She reminded G'Kar of the recent assassination attempt on Londo, noting that he had many enemies. The loss of the Centauri would be a great blow to the Alliance and Londo was their strongest supporter in the Centaurum, so the Alliance could not allow anything to happen to him. G'Kar agreed, saying Londo would need a bodyguard, someone trustworthy and strong, someone... he paused, suddenly aware of why Delenn had come to him. She wanted *him* to be Londo's guard. The symbolism of a Narn guarding a Centauri would be beautiful and it would not be a purely symbolic act – G'Kar would make a fine guard. As he played with the idea, G'Kar warmed to it. A chance for a Narn to be present at the Centauri Royal Court!

Bester met with Lochley and reported the prisoners had been rounded up and would be taken off station. Unfortunately, Lochley said, there was a complication. The telepaths had been moving from world to world for years and may have picked up all manner of alien diseases which might be communicable to humans. Earth Alliance law specified a 60 day quarantine period for anyone who had travelled in unknown space. Lochley promised they will not be permitted to leave Babylon 5. Bester reluctantly agreed, but warned Lochley to keep an eye on them – they would turn on her. He grinned coldly at Byron, saying he (Byron) knew all about that.

After he was gone, Lochley told Zack to leave the key to the cell where the telepaths can find it. She cautioned Byron that she had stuck her neck out for him and that they have 60 days to try to work something out. During that time, the telepaths are not to leave the station.

Zack warned Lochley that Byron was a martyr and said there was nothing more dangerous than that.

Londo was astonished to find that Delenn had chosen G'Kar to be his bodyguard, but accepted it. G'Kar could barely contain his grin as he and Londo headed off to the shuttle.

Meanwhile, as Lochley pondered the wisdom of her actions and fought the nagging feeling that she had forgotten something, Garibaldi waited in the brig...

In Downbelow, the telepaths conducted a candlelight celebration. Lyta entered, removed her Psi Corps badge and joined them, in song and in spirit.

Scenario and Campaign

Hooks

Franklin's project opens up an incredible number of scenario possibilities. His personal efforts are focused on securing medical information and adding it to the Alliance data banks, but there can be much more going on behind the scenes. Characters with medical expertise, or who have worked with Franklin in the past, might be asked to perform all manner of missions, some completely above-board, some clandestine. A few examples:

- ⑤ The Drafa plague is what kicked off interest in cross-species infection, but the Markab homeworld is quarantined, its jumpgate destroyed. Franklin may be interested in securing samples of older strains of the virus, samples locked away in Markab archives. Securing permission from the Alliance to do this will not be difficult; what will be difficult is actually getting the samples. Markab was the homeworld of an advanced race which became extinct without the usual round of planetary warfare or orbital bombardment – even with the jumpgate destroyed and a small protective fleet in orbit, it is a tempting target for raiders or fugitives. Any city on the planet may be home to those who do not want Rangers poking around.
- ⑤ Some non-Alliance races still regularly trade with or interact with those in the Alliance and while they are not obliged by treaty to share their medical data, it can still be useful. The Descari, for example, are an insular, somewhat xenophobic race slightly rimworld of the Earth Alliance. Franklin has noted many biological similarities between Descarans and Earth primates and thinks there is a great risk of cross-species infection. He asks the characters to travel to Descara in order to convince them to turn over their data. This places the characters in the middle of a simmering war between factions on Descara, one which wishes to remain isolated and one which is urging greater trade with the rest of the galaxy.

That 60 day quarantine period could be a killer for far-roving characters. While it may be loosely enforced, especially given the continual turnover in population on Babylon 5, it can be pulled up at any time to control or constrain character movement.

Prior to joining the Alliance, Babylon 5 applied Earth Alliance law to the station, often interpreted as the Command Staff saw fit. This meant that B5 was a safe haven for many fleeing the laws of their own territory, provided their actions were not crimes in the EA. Under the terms of the Alliance, member races may extradite criminals from Babylon 5, sending in their own forces to do this. This offers several roleplaying possibilities – characters from different worlds may suddenly find their past catching up to them, as ancient (or not so ancient) indiscretions committed far from the station suddenly come to the fore. A criminal who had been using Babylon 5 to render himself unreachable may need to get off-station and deep into neutral space quickly. Players involved in security or station administration may have a crisis of conscience if they are asked to assist in the enforcement of a law they consider unjust or unethical. A Non-Player Character scheduled to be deported claims the charges against him are false and he is being brought home in order to make it easier for him to be killed; he asks the characters to find proof of his innocence...

Who planted the explosives on Londo's transport? Saying it was one of his many enemies back on Centauri Prime may terminate the investigation as far as B5 security is concerned, but it is likely House Mollari will not casually accept the attempted murder of one of its greatest members. Furthermore, while Londo is overwhelmed with enemies, he also has many allies – albeit some that he does not recognise as allies. Characters may be asked to trace the explosives back to their source or, at the least, to find a suitable patsy to blame. It may turn out that those who tried to kill Londo were doing so because they knew he was Shadow-touched and would become a tool of the Drakh or a Centauri precognitive may have foreseen enough of the fate of Centauri Prime under the rule of Mollari that he tried to do something about it.

Who told Bester about what Lyta was doing in Downbelow? Are there spies among Byron's followers or, more likely, does Psi Corps have agents on Babylon 5? Telepaths cannot be casually detected, after all, and it is trivial for a Psi Corps spy to hide in plain sight. Further, the Corps may (with some disgust) use mundanes as intelligence sources – they have the advantage of being able to pass medical exams which screen for the telepath genes and, if caught, no bad press sticks to the Corps. In addition, such agents may not even know they are agents – a half dozen lurkers, suitably programmed, can provide a great deal of information on the status of things on B5 and never remember doing it.

Strange Relations...

The underlying theme of this episode is past connections, previously undisclosed. Properly handled, such revelations can add depth to a character and provide fodder for stories that revolve around the newly revealed relationship.

While this can be done entirely through roleplaying (and often is), it can also be controlled slightly by mechanics. Whenever a character is entitled to a new Contact, either due to taking the feat or gaining one via a class ability, they may declare the contact is an existing Non-Player Character with whom they share some undisclosed, but important, past connection. Such connections must be plausible – an elderly Narn female is not going to turn out to be a Centauri noble's true mother, but she might have been responsible for his care when he was an infant during the Centauri occupation of Narn. Some possibilities include:

Biological relationship – this is only possible between members of the same species and should be limited to non-nuclear kinship. Half-siblings, second cousins, in-laws and so on are good examples of relations that can be discovered or newly revealed.

Business relationship: For dramatic effect, this should be a relationship that was fairly deep. The two characters were partners in an enterprise which resulted in one, or both, losing everything, or one character performed extremely questionable or downright illegal acts when in the employ of another, or one character destroyed or took over the other's business.

Romantic relationships: These are fairly common. Most adults have had a string of relationships in their past, often lasting only a few months (sometimes, a few hours) and it is often the case that, for reasons of propriety, social standing or personal comfort, such relationships are rarely discussed or mentioned. Undisclosed prior relationships can include marriages, a la Sheridan and Lochley, but this is something that most races consider important and can be difficult to justify as never having been mentioned before. Other examples of romantic relationships likely to be hidden, or at least rarely talked about, can include one-night stands, relationships with an individual of a gender which is not the character's preferred (or publicly known) choice, inter-species romance, relationships across extreme class or social boundaries (such as Londo's first wife) or relationships where one or both partners were breaking legal or ethical commitments to each other. It should be noted that some of these can lead to fairly intense roleplaying and bringing them into play should be done only when the Player and Games Master are comfortable with the implications.

Teacher/student: This does not include only academic relations, but any sort of mentor/apprentice relationship. While this may seem an unlikely topic for a secret, or at least hidden, relationship, it is often the case that the characters had a falling out, perhaps a violent one (which can include emotional as well as physical violence). Two characters that oppose each other might discover they share a common mentor. One character may be forced to admit that the reason a foe keeps outwitting him is because he has taught the foe all he knows.

Characters who share a past know each other well. Each gains a +2 on Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks with regard to the other.

Secrets of the Soul (June 3rd 2262)

Franklin was in MedLab, working on his cross-species project. Today's subject was a Pak'ma'ra, whom Franklin found especially interesting, since that species was virtually immune to disease. The Pak'ma'ra said his people were the chosen of god, able to eat all things... except fish. Franklin gave his patient a barium compound, despite the Pak'ma'ra's hesitance, and was rewarded with a very detailed report on the contents of his stomach.

Meanwhile, a group of black-clad telepaths arrived at the station and were being held by security for a variety of reasons, from lack of ID to transit violations. The spokesman for the group, a young man named Peter, who had a pronounced stutter, told Zack they were with Byron and were told they could board the station. When Zack wondered, rhetorically, how many more were coming, Byron, accompanied by a newly black-clad Lyta, answered poetically. As many as wanted to, he said. He also promised to provide all the necessary paperwork. In the lift, the telepaths hugged each other in joy, and Peter demonstrated that he had improved his telekinetic abilities.

In the Zocalo, meanwhile, Zack met with Lyta, curious and angry over Lyta's association with 'those people'. He warned her that they were trouble, especially Byron and that she should stop 'seeing him'. Lyta

angrily accused him of spying on her and then of jealousy. She went on to remind him of the many times she risked her life to help Sheridan – during the Shadow War, during the civil war with Earth – and what she got in return, which was nothing. With Byron, she had finally found someone who cared for her as a person, not her utility as a tool. She declared that she was one of Byron's people and that if Byron asked her to follow him into hell, she'd do it with a smile and that nothing he could say would change that.

In Downbelow, Byron and the new arrivals were being harassed by some lurkers. Byron attempted to pass by without trouble but one particularly petulant thug was not going to let it go. Some of Byron's followers moved to protect him but Byron would not allow it. Instead, he bade the thug to hit him, which he did – several times. Byron then pointed out that the third blow was no more satisfying than the first and therefore that the thug should not expect further blows to offer any satisfaction. Bewildered by this logic, the thug and his allies departed.

Franklin met Ambassador Tal of the Hyach to discuss access to her race's medical records. Their race was a gerontocracy, ruled by the eldest. As she and Franklin spoke, her aid, Kirrin, entered the room. Now that both were present, Franklin explained what he needed and why. Tal replied that no outsider had ever had access to such records and Franklin replied that all data would be confidential. This was not enough for Kirrin – she asked, pointedly, if Franklin would be willing to die rather than betray her race's secrets. Franklin says that he would. This satisfied Tal and Kirrin demurred. Tal promised to have the materials uploaded by the time Franklin returned.



Kirrin and Tal watched him leave and then, once alone, Kirrin asserted that this was a mistake. Tal replied that the Elders had spoken and that was that. Kirrin pressed the issue – what if he finds out? Tal simply said it would have to accepted.

In his chambers, a battered Byron recovered, alone. He explained to Lyta that his followers knew he preferred to be alone at times like these. Lyta did not understand why the telepaths did not fight back – there were enough of them to put up a good fight. Byron told her that this way, only one telepath was hurt, rather than seven, a sentiment Lyta did not share. Byron persisted, saying that violence is the way of mundanes, not telepaths and that no society founded on violence has ever lasted. The telepaths would not build a new society on so flimsy a foundation as force. Lyta continued to tend to his wounds as they talked and they drew closer and kissed. Byron asked Lyta to stay with them that night, but she felt she did not belong. He led her out to the others and asked what they felt. They all moved in to embrace and caress her, making her feel welcomed and at home.

Kirrin brought the last of the data files to Dr Franklin, who had been studying them in growing confusion. The Hyach civilisation was 7,000 years old, but the data in the files only went back 800 years. Franklin would have liked older files, but Kirrin insisted that was all there was. After she left, Franklin accessed the station's computer files on the Hyach, which also only went back 800 years.

After shopping in the Zocalo, several of the telepaths were returning to their section of Downbelow. The lift was full, so Peter waited behind and took the next one. Alone, he exited, but quickly lost his way in the mazes of Brown Sector. Ill chance brought him face to face with the same thugs Byron had encountered earlier. After they stole his food, he panicked and attempted to use his telekinesis to stop them, but his abilities were too weak. He was savagely beaten and left barely alive.

In MedLab, Franklin told Byron and Lyta that Peter would 'probably' live, but this hardly diffused Byron's anger. He told Franklin that Peter was attacked by 'one of you' – mundanes, non-telepaths – for the crime of being a telepath.

In Downbelow, Byron's followers began to exact their revenge. They confronted one of the gang and placed in his mind the sensation of being burned alive. Byron managed to talk them out of it and as he went to help the unconscious thug, Zack and a security team arrived. Finding Byron standing over the body of a man who had

injured one of Byron's people did not look good and, despite Lyta's protestations, he was taken away.

In the brig, Byron, begged to be able to speak to his people. This was denied and, as Byron sat helplessly, he saw, through the eyes of his followers in Downbelow, the brutal violence they were inflicting in revenge for the assault on one of their own.

While Peter recovered in MedLab, Dr Franklin returned to the puzzle of the Hyach. He began to search for files from other races for Hyach data and finally got some hits. An ancient Drazi record spoke of the Hyach-Do, who had apparently asked the Drazi for shelter. The Drazi refused and 'notified those in charge of collection'. Franklin could find no records of Hyach-Do in current Hyach records and began searching alien records for any such references.

Sometime later, he left MedLab in a stunned daze, astounded and distressed at what he had found. He was so enraptured in the reports that he did not notice Kirrin moving behind him, until she put a gun to his head and led him into a storage chamber. He told her she was wasting her time and handed her an image he had pulled from the databases, of a being much like a Hyach, but with facial hair. He told her he knew – the Hyach-Do were all dead. They were a second sentient race on her world, one the Hyach had eventually exterminated. Kirrin filled in some of the blanks. The two races had lived together, even intermarried. Ambassador Tal arrived and continued the tale – religious laws were passed, roughly 1200 years ago, separating the races. First intermarriage was banned, then extermination began, a process which took centuries. Tal continued, saying that today, the Hyach pay the price for their genocide. Franklin demanded to know what price and Tal told him to look at the data he had extracted from the files, especially the population numbers. The Hyach population was dwindling and had been ever since the extermination of the Hyach-Do. The Hyach-Do were necessary for the Hyach to survive as a species. They are now a dying people and they needed Franklin to help them. He refused, holding the current Hyach responsible – even if the genocide occurred centuries before they were born, by keeping it secret, they were accomplices after the fact. Even if he was willing to help, this was too big a problem for him alone. Several league worlds would have to work together to accomplish anything. If the Hyach did not admit the truth about their past, then they would have no future.

Tal told Kirrin to let Franklin go. The Elders were wise – they could not admit their shame, but now that an outsider had discovered it, they could acknowledge it.

Byron, in cuffs, was led before Zack. Zack said the man had recovered, did not remember who attacked him but did remember that Byron was trying to help. This confirmed Byron's story, and he was free to go. Before he left though, Zack told of Carl Townman a 'first-class thug' in Downbelow, whose body was found about an hour ago, beaten to a pulp and quite dead. Zack asked if Byron might know anything about this and Byron angrily replied that he could not – he had been in the brig the whole time. His frustration was strong; he knew he could have stopped the beating if he been there.



Byron and Lyta returned to Downbelow. Byron was angered almost to tears; despite all his efforts, his followers had committed violence. He felt it all, through 14 floors and he blamed himself for not teaching them better. Lyta did not share this distress; while she did not condone their actions, neither did she blame them. She also felt Byron had done more for his followers – and for her – than anyone else could have done. She embraced him and began to remove her clothes. She warned him, though, that she had not been intimate with anyone since the Vorlons changed her and she had no idea what might happen when her barriers fell. He did not care. As they moved together, becoming one in body and mind, he saw all that she experienced at the hands of the Vorlons. Lyta, Byron and the other telepaths were joined mentally, in a gestalt of passion... and of knowledge. Through Lyta, they saw a long-hidden secret... the Vorlons had created the telepaths, among humans, Centauri, Drazi... all the races of the galaxy.

Later, Byron raged at the realisation. The telepaths were nothing but the Vorlon's cannon fodder, their tools for their war against the Shadows. Their existence as outsiders, as fugitives, as pariahs among their own race was due entirely to the Vorlons. Without their interference, they would be normal. The Vorlons may be gone, but the other races remained. The telepaths were made to serve their cause and save their worlds from the Shadows and now they would need to recognise that fact and pay the telepaths their due – a homeland of their own. If the Alliance would not do the right thing voluntarily then Byron would make sure they had no other choice.

Hyach

The Hyach did not develop in the fits and starts common to sentient races, but rather had a very steady, slow climb from the stone age to the space age, with limited wars and few major social upheavals. The Hyach emerged into space shortly after the end of the last Shadow war. This has given them a very long time to develop technologies in relative peace and they are one of the most advanced of the League worlds.

Hyach culture is based on gerontocracy, and this tends to make it ultra-conservative: the old dislike change. The Hyach are not stupid or stagnant, just... set in their ways. Younger Hyach often chafe at the system, vowing to change it when they come into age and power, but once the bones have begun to weaken and the skin sag, the fires of youthful ambition also burn low and the wisdom of the current system seems ever more apparent.

The Hyach are, except for their internal genocide, a generally peaceful race. They have joined the ISA and are law-abiding members of it, though they contribute only the bare minimum of ships to joint military action. The Dilgar war and the failure of the League worlds to help them, has made them wary of putting too much trust in outsiders and they believe that if push ever comes to shove, they will have to defend themselves.

Hyach racial traits:

+2 Wisdom, -2 Con: The Hyach are contemplative, thoughtful, and insightful, but they are not especially robust.

Medium size.

Base speed of 30 feet.

The Hyach are capable of great focus in times of stress. Every four levels, a Hyach may select a particular Craft, Profession or Technical sub-skill and may always take 10 with that skill, even when it would not normally be permitted.

Favoured Class: Scientist

Advanced technology: Because the Hyach have been in space so long, all of their technology is very refined. Tools and equipment give a +1 bonus, above what they would normally give and Hyach weapons, armour and the like are 10% lighter and have +1 to DR to resist breakage. Hyach pay normal price for these items; non-Hyach must pay 25% more.

Ambassador Tal

6th Level Hyach Diplomat

Hit Points: 11

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 13 (+3 Reflex)

Attacks: +3 melee or +4 ranged

Special Qualities: Contact x3, Government Resources, Improved Diplomacy

Saves: Fort +1, Reflex +3, Will +7

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +14, Computer Use +10, Diplomacy +14, Gather Information +11, Knowledge (aliens) +11, Knowledge (Hyach) +11, Listen +11, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11

Feats: Iron Will, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Diplomacy)

Tal is a long-time ambassador and serves as the face of the Hyach on Babylon 5. Anyone with dealings in Hyach space will have dealt with her at some point.

Kirrin, Ambassadorial Aide

1st Level Hyach Soldier/1st Level Diplomat

Hit Points: 10

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 11 (+1 Reflex)

Attacks: +2 melee or +2 ranged

Special Qualities: Contact, Weapon Training

Saves: Fort +2, Reflex +1, Will +2

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12

Skills: Climb +5, Computer Use +3, Gather Information +4, Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +2, Spot +4

Feats: Improved Initiative

Kirrin is a relative newcomer to the station and is sometimes quick to act without proper thought. She will learn wisdom as she ages.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Byron will not keep the secret of the Vorlons for long... but who else already knows it? Psi Corps long ago suspected that human telepaths were the result of *someone* tampering with DNA – the fact there were such ties between the first telepaths and the ‘contactee cults’ of the 2050s is evidence of that. They might have suspected the Vorlons, but there were other races known to be messing around with humans – the Vree and the Streib, for example – and certainly any number of unknown races may have intervened. At this late stage, confirmation that it was the Vorlons is not likely to be of much use, since they are all gone. However, the Psi Corps’ belief that telepaths are the next phase in human evolution could be undermined by the fact that evolution had nothing to do with it. The core of superiority to ‘mundanes’ which Psi Corps propaganda instils (and which Byron has also taken to heart, albeit in a slightly different manner) could be crippled. How would it feel to realise that you are not a great leap forward – that you are a hammer or a gun, a tool made to serve a purpose and now that purpose is gone? Human telepath characters, whether Corps or blip, should think about what this revelation will mean to their character.

Other races are going to react, too. The Minbari have long had close ties with the Vorlons, but the others – Centauri, Drazi, Brakiri and more – have not. How will their telepaths take this news?

The Pak'ma'ra are quietly convinced of their own innate superiority, as they devour death. A part of the ‘proof’ of this elevated status is their virtual immunity to disease. However, they were one of the only species to suffer from the Drafa plague that wiped out the Markab. Given the nature of Pak'ma'ra physiology, this is odd, at best. Was the Drafa plague unnatural, the work of the Shadows or their servants? If so, why were the Pak'ma'ra also targeted? It is possible that the plague was actually *based* on Pak'ma'ra genetics – the same incredible immune system that allows them to survive anything might make a plague built from their DNA impossible to cure. This, in turn, opens other avenues of speculation. Though the Pak'ma'ra are generally benign, a race of carrion eaters seems to fit with the Shadows general tastes in servants. Could the Pak'ma'ra have been a Shadow client race at one point? If so, something went wrong, as they have none of the general malice which marks such races. Might there still be remnants of Shadow tech in the dense, poisonous clouds of Melat?

The truth about the Hyach-Do is out now. Will other races react, or even care? The Centauri eliminated the Xon; Human history is full of genocidal wars; other races have many similar events in their past. Nonetheless, most races had put genocide aside by the time they reached the stars; the Hyach were a starfaring people and were still engaging in the most primitive sort of racial slaughter. This will most likely come into play in subtle ways – protests against Hyach businesses, attempts to rediscover the lost Hyach-Do culture, and so on.

The Hyach are dying, killed by the hand of their ancestors. Now that they can act openly, they will become more desperate to find a cure and that is where the characters can come in. The characters can scout out areas known to harbour Hyach-Do, looking for survivors (it is a big galaxy, after all) or even for well-preserved bodies. If reasonably fresh Hyach-Do genetic material can be extracted, the Hyach might be saved. Of course, some people might feel a race that is guilty of such a crime does not *deserve* to be saved and may undermine the Players efforts.

Franklin claimed there was only one copy of his files, that they were triply encoded and a single password error would wipe them out. This is most likely an exaggeration or perhaps Franklin (who is a doctor, not a programmer or a security specialist) does not fully understand the safety protocols on the data. No project this important would not have regular backups and user error when entering passwords (even spoken errors: a hiccup, a belch or a stammer could cause voice recognition to fail) is too common to allow for a single error to cause the data to be deleted. Most likely, this level of security applies only to the original racial medical data (which he could re-request from the source if he had to) and *not* to his conclusions or research. Still, how secure *is* that original data? Passwords on Babylon 5 are notoriously poor – most would fail against a standard 21st century dictionary hack. Even allowing that there are biometrics such as voice or retina scan which must be passed along with the spoken password, no data is 100% secure. If a legitimate user can get to it, so can an illegitimate one, with enough effort. The weakest link is the human element. You do not need brute-force to crack an encryption scheme if you have a keystroke (or voice command) logger and in the chaos of MedLab planting such devices is not entirely impossible. Many races would pay very well to have access to the data Franklin is using... for 'purely defensive purposes' of course.

What *other* secrets wait to be found in the medical records of various races? Genetic instability, evidence of species-wide genetic engineering, a predilection to breed mutants which are then quietly aborted or killed at birth? There was a lot of possible dirt hidden in those files, including

some things that the race itself might not know. Ethical dilemmas abound – genetic differences could be used to justify discrimination, either subtle or overt and be used to support irrational prejudice.

Are all the lurkers hostile to the telepaths? Many of the others in Downbelow are outcasts themselves and would feel kinship with the renegades. A Lurker character may make an effort to befriend them, to show them all mundanes are not bigots, though the teeps may regard this as condescension ('Yeah, some of your best friends are telepaths, but would you let one marry your sister?'). Some lurkers may simply try to make use of their services, offering them pay far below normal Corps rates, including barter and trade. Even the violent elements might find having a colony of semi-friendly telepaths to be useful and for the same reason mundanes do. Two gangs might try to hire one to oversee truce talks, or the operator of a Downbelow casino might ask one to be present at a high-stakes card game to ward off cheaters. How the teeps will react to this is dependant on exactly what the job is and how much a given individual has bought into Byron's philosophy. The less committed they truly are to Byron (and many of the newer arrivals are likely to be only lukewarm) the more likely they are to take on jobs which would violate his doctrines.

In the Kingdom of the Blind (June 4th 2262)

Sheridan, Delenn and Garibaldi met to discuss the latest reports from the Rangers. A series of attacks on Alliance shipping was undermining commerce. As he read the reports. Sheridan realised that the attackers were not normal raiders – the attackers were destroying ships laden with cargo, not stealing it for their own use. Raiders normally destroyed the ships only after looting. Garibaldi commented on the extreme precision and thoroughness of the attacks. Sheridan worried about the reaction of the rest of the Alliance. With every race being hit equally, there was no obvious culprit – which meant that all of the races would blame each other. Sheridan was determined to find out who was behind the attacks, even as elsewhere another freighter fell to the unknown attackers...

As Prime Minister Mollari entered the Imperial Palace on Centauri Prime, all heads turned and a flood of whispers followed in his wake. This was due not only to the fact he was Emperor-to-be, but because he was accompanied by a Narn. Minister Vitelli congratulated Londo on bringing

his own 'entertainment' and was quite taken aback when Londo told him G'Kar was his bodyguard.

In Downbelow, the telepaths were all gathered. Byron spoke to them, telling them of the revelation he had experienced the night before – that the telepaths were created by the Vorlons to be used as weapons. Byron was furious at how he, and the others, were condemned to lives on the periphery of society due to the actions of the Vorlons. Lyta tried to calm him, saying that the past could not be changed and that there was no one left to blame – all the First Ones were gone. Byron took this thread and ran with it. With the First Ones gone, the Telepaths were weapons without a war. Byron refused to accept that they were abandoned. There was, he said, another way – a dangerous one.

On Centauri Prime, Lord Jano, an old friend of G'Kar, endured a frisking by G'Kar before entering Londo's chambers. He passed along the news that the Regent was ill, and further, had been unseen for months, except by his personal physician and a few aides... and by some of the palace staff, who had come upon him late at night, wandering the halls talking to himself. At one point, in a drunken stupor, he begged a guard to kill him. Londo found the tale of his drunkenness odder than the rest; the Regent had always been a sober man, very odd for a Centauri. Lord Jano said that this was not the end of the strangeness... mundane reports on fleet actions and food production are being classed as top secret. Jano felt a darkness was falling over the palace and hoped that Londo could get to the bottom of it. Londo, after all, would be able to get in to see the Regent – the Regent could not dodge his own Prime Minister.

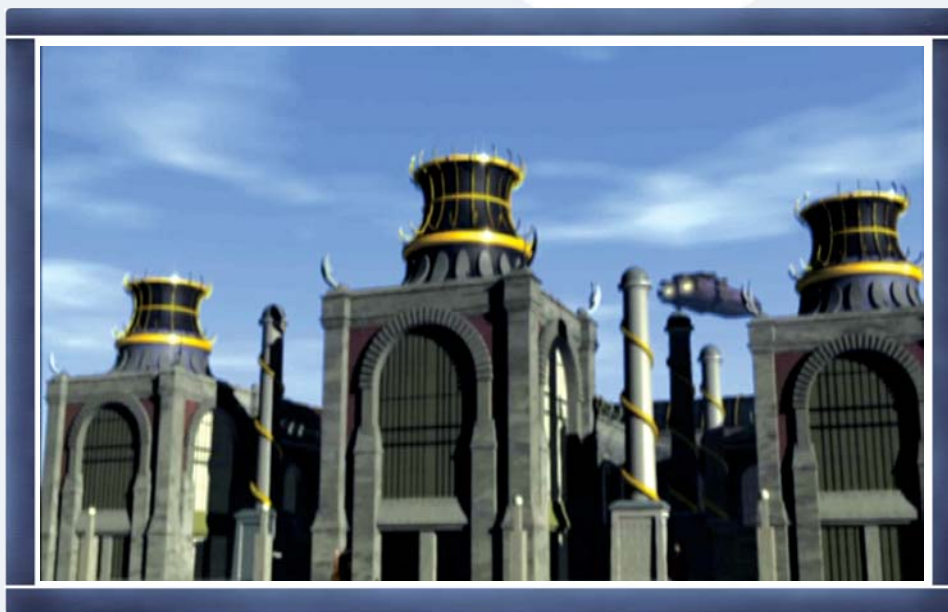
Jano returned to his quarters, which were dark. The lights failed to activate on command. Jano took up a glow globe and found the Regent sitting, awaiting him. Jano greeted him politely as the Regent rambled and humoured the obviously ill man. The Regent said that, if it were his decision, no one would harm Jano... and, as Jano was flung across his quarters by an unknown assailant, the Regent sadly muttered that it was not his decision at all...

On Babylon 5, the normal business of the Alliance played out. Sheridan ended the meeting and promised to upload the latest report on shipping as the delegates filed out. One by one the ambassadors wandered to their quarters, unaware that Byron's telepaths were surreptitiously scanning them.

Back in Downbelow, Byron received the reports, one by one, as his agents filed back. He told Lyta he would need her more in the next 24 hours than he had ever needed anyone. As he turned to leave, she asked him if he was ever afraid. He was. Constantly.

On Centauri, Londo insisted on seeing the Regent, only to be blocked by a sneering Minister Vitelli. Londo's frustration at this was magnified by the seeming disappearance of Lord Jano, who was supposed to have met with Londo in the throne room. While some of the court tentatively touched G'Kar, as if trying to see if he was real, Lord Vole upbraided Londo for having a Narn as a bodyguard, claiming it was an insult to the Imperial Guard and a danger to the court – the Narn were barbarians who could not control themselves. Vole sought to prove this – he brought forth the guard who had whipped G'Kar on Cartagia's order. Vole handed G'Kar the whip, and promised that G'Kar would suffer no penalty for anything he might care to do to the guard. G'Kar felt a moment of rage, but he suppressed it. The guard, he explained, acted only under orders and Cartagia was dead. He dropped the whip at Vole's feet and told him that more pain comes from the mouth than from the heart or the hand.

Before this could continue, Minister Vitelli pulled Londo away, showing him a tragic sight – Lord Jano, hanging in his quarters. G'Kar did not accept this as suicide – he had seen Lord Jano's eyes and knew he was not a man who would



seek death. Londo agreed and knew Jano had been murdered.

Byron met with Garibaldi to ask permission to address the Alliance Council, however he would not tell Garibaldi what he wanted, which made Garibaldi refuse him permission. The security risks would be too great. Byron scanned Garibaldi and plucked from his brain knowledge about the recent attacks. Using this, he claimed he had information about said attacks, but did not want to give it to any one race first – to be fair, all the races needed to hear at once. Garibaldi saw the wisdom in this and acceded to Byron's request.

At the council meeting, Byron addressed the council, and pulled a fast 'bait and switch'. While Sheridan expected a report on the shipping attacks, Byron and Lyta handed out reports on the Vorlon creation of telepaths, including human telepaths. Byron laid out the plight of telepaths – they were condemned to miserable lives, for the benefit of other races and now the bill was coming due. They – the races who benefited from the telepaths during the Shadow War – must now help the telepaths, by giving them a homeworld of their own. There were, he claimed, many habitable worlds that were unclaimed or unsullied. Sheridan grew angry at Byron's deception and his anger was met by Byron's own righteous fury. Byron told Sheridan and the others that the telepaths would no longer be hiding their abilities. For the past two days, each ambassador had been tailed by a telepath and all of their secrets were laid bare. Either the telepaths gained a homeworld, or the secrets of every race would be revealed.

Garibaldi berated himself for trusting Byron, for trusting any telepath, even though Sheridan said Garibaldi had no way of knowing what Byron was planning. Sheridan also realised that the telepaths did not perform deep scans, only surface ones, so the only secrets they knew were those that were being thought about actively. However, every ambassador would fear that at some time their thoughts had dwelled, even for a moment, on the worst secrets they knew. This uncertainty about what Byron might know gave him a powerful edge and Byron was not revealing what knowledge he had.

Delenn wondered if the telepaths might not be right, if they did not truly deserve a home as payment for their work in the Shadow War, as compensation for all they had suffered for generations. Sheridan agreed that, in principle, she was right, but as a practical matter... the telepaths were going about it the wrong way. Delenn pointedly noted to Sheridan that the new President of Earth had said the same thing to *him* following Earth's civil war. As he left the

council chambers, Sheridan mused that at least the problem remained political – it had not devolved into violence.

On Centauri Prime, G'Kar and Londo bickered. A knock on the door brought Minister Vitelli, with word that the Regent would now see Londo. Londo and G'Kar made their way to the Regent's quarters, where they were interrupted by cloaked assassins. G'Kar turned to fight them and held them off but he and they were cut off by a closing doorway.

Londo, alone, turned to see Lord Vole, who told Londo he should not have returned to Centauri Prime, that Londo was an obstacle to Vole's plans. Swiftly, Vole hurled a knife at Londo, the point precisely aimed between his hearts... and then, the knife stopped. It hovered in the air for an instant, an inch from Londo's chest, then spun around and buried itself to the hilt in Lord Vole. Vole collapsed as Londo watched in shock and confusion. He turned in time to see a red-eyed, barely humanoid figure standing there. At this moment, G'Kar made it through the door and finished off one of the two assassins and when Londo looked back at the red-eyed figure, it was gone. G'Kar led Londo off to safety.

In Downbelow, Byron berated one of his followers for breaking orders. No one was to leave their area until the Council replied to their demands, but one of them had gone off alone to get supplies. Given the instant upsurge in anti-telepath sentiment which Byron's grandstand play had just caused, he was afraid a lone telepath would be a target for random violence.

He was right.

Even as he spoke, the entire group received a mental image, of one of their own being beaten by three Drazi who wanted to know who had 'violated' their ambassador. Byron tried to restrain the rest of his followers, but they were no longer willing to cling to his philosophy of non-violence. Despite his efforts, a large portion of his group seized makeshift weapons and attacked the Drazi. The others, those committed to peace, felt every blow struck as fully as the Drazi did and wept for the fracturing of their dream.

Alone in the Council chambers, Sheridan pondered. A debate in the Council had just ended and Sheridan saw what it took to get the ambassadors of a dozen worlds to work together. Zack interrupted his musings. Lochley, who never supported the idea of the telepath colony to begin with, wanted Security to begin rounding the telepaths up – but because they were admitted under the

auspices of the alliance, Zack needed Sheridan's permission first. Zack estimated there were 50 to 150 people to gather. Sheridan felt that, maybe, the Alliance did owe the telepaths something... but nothing could be done under the current circumstances. Sadly, he told Zack that security had full authorisation to act.

In Downbelow, Byron and his followers prepared for assault, trying to build a secure point from which to resist security. Even as his followers braced themselves for further violence, Byron put forth his belief in passive, non-violent, resistance. He hoped that if the telepaths could hold out, show their commitment to peace even when they were hunted and starving, that this would sway other worlds to their side. This caused a growing schism among his people. His pacifist views may have lured his followers originally, but when the time came to live by non-violence even when others were planning to use violence against them, many found the rhetoric could not withstand the reality. Byron chose to stay in the group's region of Downbelow and told those who wished to go, to go. Many stayed; many left.

In the halls of the Imperial Palace, a fawning Lord Vitelli proclaimed his joy at Londo's narrow escape, the details of which Londo kept extremely vague. Vitelli declared Vole had always been over-ambitious, but that problem was solved. Londo was not mollified. Vitelli had been the one who had come to get him, who had set him on the path that took him to Vole and his assassins. Vitelli recoiled in fear as G'Kar demanded more information. He blustered that the Regent *had* been there when he, Vitelli, had come for Londo, but the Regent was gone now. Behind Vitelli, a hidden form gestured for Londo.

Londo and G'Kar followed the mysterious figure to the throne room. Londo told G'Kar to wait outside, while Londo approached the throne alone. The Regent was there, hiding behind the throne and gibbering madly. The Regent, sliding between lucidity and madness, told Mollari he was glad 'we' were there to save him, that Londo had been one of the only ones to treat him kindly. Londo expressed surprise that the Regent had saved him and the Regent clarified – 'they' had saved him; 'they' liked him. Londo, they said, was just like 'them'. Londo demanded to know who 'they' were. The Regent told him to be quiet and then he apologised to Londo, saying he was sorry. He also brought a message from 'them' to Londo: That he should not ask about supplies and ships. The Regent, his brief hold on sanity slipping, warned Londo that he had little time and that he should enjoy it. There would be one more conversation before the end, the Regent said and dismissed Londo.

Shaken and confused, Londo rejoined G'Kar, as back in the throne room, the Regent's keeper tortured him for hinting too broadly to Londo.

As G'Kar slept fitfully, Londo was wide awake. He woke G'Kar and informed him that they were heading back to Babylon 5 in the morning. As he tried to doze, he wondered what the Regent was doing with their ships...

Elsewhere, a Brakiri merchant vessel begged an unseen attacker for mercy. As the unarmed cargo ship exploded, a massive Centauri warship flew off, leaving the space behind it strewn with corpses and wreckage...

In Downbelow, Lyta and Byron rested together, as Zack urged the telepaths to surrender. He offered Lyta a chance to leave before things got any worse, but her place was now with Byron. Byron told her that there would come a time when he would tell her to leave him behind and made her promise that she would heed him when that moment came.

Minister Vitelli

4th level Centauri Diplomat

Hit Points: 9

Initiative: +0 (+0 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 11 (+1 Reflex)

Attacks: +1 melee or +2 ranged

Special Qualities: Contact x4, Improved Diplomacy

Saves: Fort +1, Reflex +1, Will +5

Abilities: Str 9, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 15

Skills: Appraise +8, Computer Use +5, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +10, Forgery +8, Gather Information +9, Sense Motive +8, Spot +4

Feats: Contact x 2

Minister Vitelli is a typical court noble – he is skilled at subterfuge, diplomacy and little else. He could make a useful contact, knowing many low ranking nobles, palace guards or others on the fringes of the Court 'scene'.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Someone wants Londo dead, and is willing to kill countless innocents to do it. It can be presumed the same forces that destroyed Londo's liner in *Strange Relations* were behind this assassination attempt. There are several possibilities for who is behind this. The simplest one is that it is simply a rival house – House Refa, for example, has a significant grudge against House Mollari and even though they are now far from power, they will still try to take revenge. It is

also possible that those who benefited from the madness of Emperor Cartagia would want to strike back at the man who many suspect was responsible for Cartagia's death, no matter what the 'official' coroners report might say. However, there are other possibilities. The darkness that haunts Londo is not entirely a secret. There may be forces working behind the scenes that know Londo is the chosen of the Drakh and who will do anything to prevent his ascension (they may not be aware of how easily the Drakh can turn anyone to their cause, however). Even killing the passengers and crew of a liner could be justified if it will save millions or even billions of lives in the long run.

The Drakh have a presence on Centauri Prime now – a hidden one, to be sure, but a presence. They have ships, troops, supplies, technology – all secret. Secrets though, have a way of getting out. A thief looking for a place to hide might find a cache of Drakh weapons and, not knowing what they are or how much they are worth, sell them cheaply on the black market. If such weapons begin showing up in the hands of common thugs, eyebrows will be raised and someone will be asked to look into it.

It is also possible for the Players to become caught up in rumours of 'monsters' in the palace, strange kidnappings that are later forgotten by the victims and so on. Unusual vehicles may be spotted briefly in the sky and those who investigate such occurrences too closely will find themselves visited by black-garbed officials claiming to represent the Royal Court, who will urge silence and offer veiled, or not so veiled, threats. Some witnesses simply vanish or commit suicide. Members of the civilian law-enforcement apparatus on Centauri Prime may take it upon themselves to find out what is going on.

The Centauri raids never leave witnesses, or even lose a ship in battle (which would leave behind incriminating wreckage). This implies they have very advanced knowledge of shipping routes and fleet composition, so that they can be certain that any transport fleet they encounter will be easy prey. It can be presumed all races have begun using Q-ships, adding escorts to transport fleets and so on, but



such protected shipping is either never targeted or targeted only with overwhelming force. Someone is providing the Centauri – or rather the Drakh – with detailed information. Since the Centauri, other than the Regent and a few other Drakh puppets, are unaware of the attacks, it is likely non-Centauri are feeding the information back to the Regent. Such agents would be members of the races being struck and might not even know to whom their reports are going – they may think they are dealing with normal raiders. Tracking down such agents and trying to trace back from them to their superiors could enmesh Players in a galaxy-wide Drakh intelligence network.

Some telepaths may not want to wait for a world to be granted to them. As Byron noted, there are many inhabitable and unexplored worlds in the galaxy. While seizing one without legal authority by whoever maintains putative control would be unwise, some telepaths may be desperate enough to do it and establish a colony of their own on some forgotten world. Some may have already done so – Players who are exploring strange new worlds may detect unexpected energy signatures on a supposedly 'empty' planet, land, and find a few dozen blips living in a makeshift colony – blips who will be very unhappy to be discovered and who will not need to obey Psi Corps rules as regards the treatment of mundanes.

So what *do* the telepaths know? With the schism in Byron's followers growing, some of them might be tempted to cash in, seeking out ambassadors and threatening them with blackmail. Any Player ambassadors may find themselves confronting a telepath who has embarrassing, or possibly lethal, information to hold over them.

A Tragedy of Telepaths (June 16th 2262)

Captain Lochley slept fitfully, the ongoing stress and frustration of running Babylon 5 wearing on her – especially the rapidly degenerating situation with the telepaths, something that was not her fault in the first place. They had secluded themselves in Brown Sector, shutting down access tubes, closing air ducts and otherwise making it impossible for security to get them out. Further, they were threatening a hunger strike until their demands were met. President Sheridan, who was responsible for the telepaths being there in the first place, was too concerned with the attacks on Alliance shipping to pay too much attention to the situation in Downbelow. The diplomats, in turn, were only more concerned with shipping than with the illegal scans the telepaths had performed because they assumed the holed-up telepaths would all soon be dead, either from hunger or from battles with security.

Of course, if the diplomats knew some of the telepaths had split with Byron and were *not* holed up waiting to starve or be killed, things would have been even worse...

Lochley had a solution to the problem, but she knew it was not one anyone would like. With trepidation, she opened a channel to Psi Corps on Earth... and called for Bester.

Lochley met Zack in Brown Sector. As they stood amidst the sparks and heat from cutting torches, Zack updated her on the situation – they were making steady progress here,

and set up a second team a few levels away as a distraction. The telepaths, however, were not helplessly waiting to be caught. They fought back, using their abilities to fill the minds of the workers with nightmares and terror – for example, making one of them certain that a bomb was on the other side of the wall, waiting to go off as soon as the burn-through was complete. This slowed progress considerably and by the time one worker was replaced with another, the telepaths had re-secured the partially burned through area.

Lochley realised that a single telepath could only accomplish this through line-of-sight; for the telepaths to do this through inches of bulkhead, they had to be gathered en-masse, joined together in a gestalt. As she realised this, the telepaths on the other side of the wall knew she had realised it and contacted her briefly.

Lochley asked Zack about alternate routes of entry – air ducts and so on. There were a few, but only one person could enter and that was too risky to permit. This did not deter the Captain; she simply told Zack to find her a way in and she would worry about getting back out.

This was what the telepaths had been waiting for. They had been hoping she would draw near so they could send her a message. They knew the message had been sent, but they did not know whether it had been received.

Londo, meanwhile, puzzled over production reports. They were baffling. In this time of relative peace, Centauri Prime should be cutting back on ship production and reinvesting in domestic development. G'Kar, feasting on fresh spoo, was mildly astounded by the sensibility of this policy and wondered who the Centauri had got the idea from. Londo ignored this jibe and continued pondering the reports. G'Kar baited him a bit more, then, in a gesture approaching friendship, offered him some spoo. Londo found this more offensive than the rest of G'Kar's comments... spoo was supposed to age. Eating fresh spoo was an insult to the Centauri, which was why the Narn did it. Londo could not even understand where G'Kar got it. G'Kar said he saw it on a tray heading to the south end of the palace and felt no one would mind if he took it. Londo suddenly had a fresh



mystery: only Narn could stomach fresh spoo, but G'Kar was supposedly the only Narn in the palace... so to whom was the spoo being delivered?

G'Kar's mood darkened. He asked Londo what was in that part of the palace. Londo told him there were gardens, old living quarters... and underground cells. The two headed to the darkened prison chamber to find, long-forgotten by the Centauri, Na'Toth – G'Kar's former aide.

Na'Toth recounted the attacks on Narn, the five million killed in minutes by Centauri bombardment. Londo remembered it too, seeing the world from orbit as his fleet pounded it to ruin. Na'Toth was captured in the capital and brought to Centauri Prime as a trophy. That was two years ago.

Tearfully, G'Kar demanded to know how this was possible, how she could have been kept here and then forgotten. Londo did not know – he was not even *on* Centauri Prime when Na'Toth was taken – but he suspected that the Emperor gave an order and then forgot about it. Without an imperial countermand, the order simply remained in force. Some imperial orders were obeyed for centuries, long after any reason for the order had passed. Na'Toth's imprisonment was simply a mistake. G'Kar insisted that the mistake be corrected, but this was not so simple. Londo, as Prime Minister, could not countermand an imperial decree – only the Regent could do so. This did not mollify G'Kar in the slightest – either Na'Toth would be freed or the palace, and Londo, would burn.

In Brown Sector, a small passage had been found which *might* lead Lochley into the heart of the telepath's domain... if the far end was not sealed. Lochley went in, unarmed and left instructions for Zack in case she did not come out.

Sheridan and Garibaldi discussed this. Lochley's actions had earned some grudging respect from Garibaldi, who had other comments on the situation. Byron's loyal followers did not concern him that much – they were already in a cell and would either leave and be arrested, or stay and starve. The others though, the renegades who left Byron and were wandering free on the station... those were the ones which troubled him. This was still not the end of Sheridan's troubles. Garibaldi showed him a fragment of Brakiri alloy taken from the site of an attack on Drazi shipping. The Brakiri were unlikely suspects – they normally did not attack without provocation – but the Drazi were still going to introduce the evidence at the next Council meeting. Sheridan felt the Alliance spinning out of control, fraying, each member race pulling at a thread. Garibaldi cynically noted that history was demarcated by war, not by peace.

Lochley continued her crawl through the tunnels and finally emerged in Byron's region of Downbelow, where she was escorted to Byron by several of his followers. Lochley explained that Byron's timing could not have been worse. The attacks on Alliance shipping had put every race on edge, looking for a target, and Byron's blackmail attempt simply focused all of their paranoia on him and his people. His chance at securing a homeworld was gone and this stand-off was meaningless. However, this was not her decision, Byron reminded her. Lochley pleaded with Byron to either leave or, at the least, to help identify the renegades in the station. Byron continued to define 'intransigent'. He would not leave, he would not compromise, he would not betray even those who had deserted him. Seeing the impossibility of reaching him, Lochley turned to the others – were *they* willing to stay here and most likely die? They all were.

Lochley was growing more frustrated. Why did they summon her, grant her safe passage, if they were not interested in negotiation? Byron's reply was simple and chilling: To say goodbye. Lochley had been fair to them and that merited comment. Shaken, Lochley left.

A more personal, but equally vexing, problem played itself out on Centauri Prime. G'Kar had secured a Narn vessel which could meet with Londo and himself when they were en route to Babylon 5, but this still left the problem of getting Na'Toth onto the ship – without killing anyone or being killed themselves. An attractive young Centauri woman interrupted their planning to inform Londo the next cruiser for Babylon 5 was leaving that evening. As she left, Londo had an inspiration. He told her she was just what he was looking for and to remove her clothes. He wanted, he explained, to borrow them.

In a closed session of the Alliance Council, the Drazi ambassador presented his information. He showed the metal fragment, and accused the Brakiri of using the telepaths to get information about Drazi shipping and defence systems. Further, the Drazi had dispatched warships to the borders of Brakiri space and would begin a tit-for-tat policy – each Drazi ship destroyed would be matched by the destruction of a Brakiri ship. This was not war, he claimed, but self-defence. Delenn silenced the growing debate by bringing forth the Gaim ambassador. *They* had found Drazi metal fragments among the ruins of one of *their* ships. The Brakiri accused the Drazi of trickery, but then Sheridan intervened. Yes, he said, it was a trick, but not one played by either the Drazi or the Brakiri. A third party was sowing chaos in order to break the Alliance. Garibaldi had done a more detailed analysis of both metal fragments and had proven they were not blown off in combat – they had been *cut* off and planted. Delenn and Sheridan begged for



more time to solve the problem, but it was uncertain if the assembled races would grant it.

Londo, alone, was visiting Na'Toth's cell on Centauri Prime. He told the guard to cease patrolling this area and, in three days, to wall off the section. The guard obeyed and left. G'Kar then arrived and the two of them set about freeing Na'Toth.

Disguised as a veiled Centauri female, Na'Toth was escorted out to the waiting ship by Mollari, who feigned drunken lechery. He passed by a dozen or more nobles, all of whom turned away rather than witness the shameful spectacle.

Bester had arrived on Babylon 5. This news spread rapidly through the telepath community, especially those who were not trapped in Downbelow. In order to protect Byron and his dream, some were willing to defy that dream and began to arm themselves to fight back.

In Brown Sector, Bester arrived at the sight of the failed attempt to burn through the wall. He approached the stricken worker and removed the images of fear the telepaths had planted there. He then told the worker to put his hand on the wall, while Bester, in turn, put his hand on the worker's shoulder. Through this conduit, he touched the minds of the assembled telepaths on the other side and set up a block around the worker's mind. The burn through would resume.

Meanwhile, a group of telepaths invaded a security supply area. Using a blend of telepathy and physical violence, they forced open the armoury and handed out the weapons. Shortly thereafter, even as Bester was speaking of telepathic

unity and his desire to not harm the 'blips', the newly-armed and no longer non-violent telepaths opened fire on him, Lochley and security. Several mundanes died; so did several telepaths. Bester was far more concerned about the latter than the former.

Inside, Byron and those who still followed his true vision were reeling from the assault. They knew what had happened and Byron could feel his dream falling apart. He could not abide the fact people were killing in his name and he knew what he had to do to stop it.

Meanwhile, other dreams hovered on the edge of collapse. Sheridan and Delenn had called the feuding Drazi, Gaim and Brakiri ambassadors together and hoped to continue their discussions. Sheridan had new information to share with them. A monitor screen showed the Drazi fleet poised to attack Brakiri space... and then showed the White Stars poised to attack the Drazi, should it come to that. Similar fleets monitored the Gaim and the Brakiri. The Alliance Constitution gave the Alliance authority over inter-member disputes. Sheridan would not condone any attacks until there was proof of guilt. Once the truth of who was behind the attacks was known, then, the Alliance would support whatever action the member worlds deemed just.

In deep space, far from Centauri Prime, Londo and G'Kar watched Na'Toth's shuttle take her to a Narn ship and to freedom, while on Babylon 5 a shuttle arrived from Psi Corps bearing a bloodhound unit. Lochley settled in for another deeply troubled sleep.

Citizen Na'Toth

6th Level Narn Soldier/1st Level Diplomat

Hit Points: 26

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 15 (+5 Reflex)

Attacks: +8 melee or +7 ranged

Special Qualities: Contact, Covering Fire, Low-Light Vision

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +5

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

Skills: Climb +3, Gather Information +3, Hide +3, Intimidate +7, Jump +3, Survival +5

Feats: Blood Rage, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (PPG)

This represents Na'Toth as she is after more than a year locked in the Centauri cell, seriously weakened in body but not in soul. After two months on Narn, change Str to 16, Dex to 15 and Con to 16, adjusting all other statistics and saves as required.

Byronism

Byron is not just a person; he is the leader of a movement and the articulator of a philosophy. He has a legacy that will live beyond his lifetime and, as with many such legacies, it will fragment, split and distort with age. Byron never compiled a specific book or record of his teachings like the Communist Manifesto, the Gospels or the Book of G'Quan – he simply expressed his values to his followers, telepathically, a surer and deeper form of communication than written words. However, an idea sent telepathically is then coloured by the beliefs and values of the recipient and when they send it on it is not quite the same going out as it was coming in. Subtle shifts in emphasis and the alteration of seemingly minor points of detail accumulate with each transfer. As such, the post-mortem assembly of his work in printed and datacrystal form was difficult and what resulted is a rough approximation – greatly abridged here.

The following are the key points of Byron's credo, as he would probably like it to be remembered. Splinter groups have altered this set of principles to varying extents and these are discussed as well.

The Core Principles

Pacifism: Violence is for brute animals. No problem is solved by the use of force, not even force used in retaliation or in self-defence. The moment you take up arms, you debase yourself. To use violence against a foe means the enemy has already beaten you – he has reduced you to his level.

Resistance: Non-violence does not mean submission to evil. To allow yourself to be bullied by those who use violence renders a philosophy of non-violence meaningless. Giving in to those who use force to control or intimidate allows violence to appear to work. To show that force is never the answer, you must never let the fear of it guide your actions or control your choices.

Desire: Always pursue your passion. Do things because the desire sings within you, not because someone else wishes

you to do them, or because it is your duty, or because you fear the consequences of not doing them. Everyone must find those things inside which truly matter. To aid another in pursuing their desires (when doing so is done out of a sincere desire of your own, to help) is an act of great virtue and nobility.

Community: We are social animals and we are far stronger together than apart. The pursuit of our private passions must take place in a framework of public responsibility. We cannot let one another want for basic needs – not just needs for food or warmth but for love, support and companionship. We are responsible not only for what we do, but what we do *not* do – for each hand not offered in aid, for each word not spoken in comfort, for each coin hoarded and not given to those who need it more.

Separation: We are not like the mundanes. We cannot live among them. They will hate and fear us, chain us and control us. Ultimately, they will seek to exterminate us. Only among our own kind can we be free; among mundanes, none of the principles espoused here can be fully embraced.

Inequality: We are not like the mundanes. We are *better*, and pretending we are not is a lie that harms them and us. We feel each other's pain, each other's joy. We are capable of community and communion in a way they are not. We can build a society without deceit, without hate, without injustice, because all of us are open to each other at all times. Small wounds on the soul are not allowed to fester uncontrolled, because they are visible to all. The secrets and deceptions that tear mundane society apart and place it forever at war with itself are not part of our world – unless we choose to ape the mundane world, to our folly.

Schism Groups

It is his disciple, who shall tell us how much the Master would have scrapped, had he lived till now – What he would have modified, of what he said before. It is his disciple shall do this and more... (Kipling, 'The Disciple')

Following Byron's death, his followers dispersed. Many sought to carry on his work as they thought he would have done, but many differed on precisely what that entailed. Others openly claimed Byron's philosophy was 'incomplete', due to his untimely demise and took it upon themselves to complete or perfect it.

The two largest 'splinter' factions are composed of many specific subgroups that differ on minor points, but in general they can be described as the Vanguardists

and Reconciliationists. Their take on Byron's credo is as follows:

Vanguardist Creed

Justice: Violence is for brute animals and mundanes. No problem is solved solely by the use of force, but force used in retaliation or self-defence is often a component of the solution. The moment you take up arms, you dissuade others from using their arms against you. To use violence against a foe should be done only when the foe has used, or is threatening to use, violence against you.

Resistance: Non-violence often means submission to evil. To allow yourself to be bullied by those who use violence is inevitable unless you are prepared to fight back. Giving in to those who use force to control or intimidate allows violence to work for them – you must make it work for you. To show that force will not compel you, you must be prepared to use it when required.

Desire: The Vanguardists do not differ from Byron here.

Community: We telepaths are social animals and we are far stronger together than apart. The pursuit of our private passions must take place in a framework of public responsibility to other telepaths. We cannot let any telepath want for their basic needs – not just needs for food or warmth, but for love, support and companionship. With regard to our fellow telepaths, we are responsible not only for what we do, but what we do *not* do – for each hand not offered in aid, for each word not spoken in comfort, for each coin hoarded and not given to those who need it more.

Separation: We are not like the mundanes. We cannot live among them. They will hate and fear us, chain us and control us. Ultimately, they will seek to exterminate us. Only among our own kind can we be free; among mundanes, none of the principles espoused here can be fully embraced. The defence of our community against mundanes must be accomplished by any means necessary.

Inequality: The Vanguardists do not differ from Byron here.

Reconciliationist Creed

The Reconciliationists view the violence that ended the B5 colony as a consequence of separatism. They are composed almost entirely of first-generation teeps, those born to mundane families and raised by them, who discovered their telepathy relatively late in life. Most come from distant colony worlds where genetic screening for telepathy was not performed regularly.

They feel that telepaths have an obligation to help mundanes. The utopian community envisioned by Byron is possible in a mixed society, provided telepaths do not limit themselves. They believe that a superior social order will come about when mundanes are routinely scanned by telepaths, who will find anti-social or violent desires and eliminate them. There would be no Psi Corps or separation of telepaths and mundanes. No one would ever know who is watching their thoughts, so no one would dare to commit crimes – even if there were no witnesses, a stray thought would give them away. There would be no jails; those guilty of crimes (said guilt determined solely by thoughtscan) would have their brains modified until they no longer had criminal impulses.

Where Byron strove to find a balance between self-realisation and strength through community, the reconciliationists feel that community is more important.

Pacifism: The Reconciliationists do not differ from Byron here.

Resistance: The Reconciliationists do not differ from Byron here.

Desire: Always pursue your passion, if it is a proper passion and does not interfere with your duty to others. Do things because the desire sings within you, not because you fear the consequences of not doing them. Everyone must find those things inside which truly matter. To aid another in pursuing their desires is an act of great virtue and nobility.

Community: We are social animals and we cannot exist alone. The pursuit of our private passions must be secondary to our public responsibility. We cannot let another want for their basic needs – not just needs for food or warmth, but for love, support and companionship. We are responsible not only for what we do, but what we do *not* do – for each hand not offered in aid, for each word not spoken in comfort, for each coin hoarded and not given to those who need it more.

Togetherness: We are not like the mundanes, but only in the same way that one twin is not like another. We still have much in common. We are their children. We have the ability to make them better than they are. We can use our gifts to aid them. We can talk to them, even if they cannot talk to us; we have both the ability and the obligation to make their world better.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

There are over 20 major worlds in the Republic and several times that number of minor worlds, outposts and so on. During the War of Retribution, a *lot* of Narns were shipped from their homes, to be used as slaves or paraded as trophies. The terms of the Centauri abandonment of Narn included the return of all prisoners, but it is very difficult to enforce such an edict over a region of space as vast as that of the Republic. Earth's own history is filled with stories – some true, some apocryphal – of POWs left behind for years, even decades, in foreign nations. It is possible there are many other 'forgotten' Narn in the backwaters of the Republic – some may not even know the war is over, or may have been told Nar'Shal has been utterly destroyed, making them think there is no place to return home *to*. Players may stumble upon such prisoners in the course of other actions, or they may be hired by family members or the Narn provisional government to go look for them. Since defiance of the order to return all such captives is a major crime, those who are holding them will take extreme measures to keep from being caught.

Na'Toth, now freed, will very likely become an important symbol to the Narn, someone who survived Centauri oppression for years. She will be almost a living incarnation of the survivalist spirit of the Narn. Unlike G'Kar, who learned tolerance and forgiveness, she has learned only survival through strength born of rage. With the Narn in a state of societal transition, she could rise to become a leader in her own right, appealing to those who find G'Kar's message of reconciliation to be unappealing or even treasonous. The Book of Na'Toth, preaching Narn solidarity as the only bulwark against a hateful and uncaring galaxy, may well come into being, setting her on a course against her former mentor. Even if she does not do this, it is likely a movement that will arise, making her an unwilling symbol of their cause.

Byron's actions are undoubtedly having an impact on other worlds. Elsewhere in the galaxy, rogue telepaths may choose to take action 'in support' of Byron, ranging from similar sit-in type protests to acts of violence against mundanes.



Likewise, mundanes who view him, or his philosophy, as a threat, may turn their wrath on any telepaths they know of – often including Psi Corps members opposed to Byron. Player characters anywhere in EA space may encounter echoes of the events happening on Babylon 5, from a group of blips staging a take-over of a spaceport or government building to a lynch mob looking for any teep they can find.

Not all mundanes are anti-Byron – many will find his philosophy of pacifism appealing and his call for telepath rights to be totally justified. Many civil rights movements in Earth history were strengthened by the support of those who were not directly affected, but whose conscience or philosophy would not allow them to support the oppression of others. Byron, too, will attract mundane supporters, who may stage protests 'in solidarity' with him. These can range from sincere acts of brotherhood to cynical attempts to use Byron's stand-off to garner media attention for unrelated causes.

Phoenix Rising (June 19th 2262)

Bester was bringing a squadron of Psi Cops up to speed. The rogues in Downbelow were human and fell under Earth jurisdiction. They had stolen privileged information from the minds of dozens of ambassadors, with the intent of blackmailing homeworlds throughout the races of the Alliance. The rogues had schismed; half were holed up and performing a hunger strike. This group was of little concern to Bester, since they were contained and weakening themselves. The other group, though, was

going to be trouble. They were scattered and some of them were armed. Bester urged his troops to limit the losses. The rogues were wayward children, members of the same telepath family and a strong effort to bring them in alive had to be made.

Lochley met with him as the Psi Cops filed out. She commented he seemed to enjoy all the drama, the thrill of the chase. To Bester, though, it was all about being good at what he did – something Lochley should also appreciate. His job was to protect normals from rogues. He was necessary. Every race had to have some means of controlling telepaths and the Psi Corps was preferable to many of the alternatives.

As the two left the briefing room, Bester continued. Both the Psi Cops and the rogues were telepaths. They were on the same side. All that he had to do was remind the renegades of that fact. Then the lift opened, revealing the mangled body of a Psi Cop, hung beneath the words 'Free Byron', written in blood.

Sheridan and Lochley received a call from Byron. Sheridan answered eagerly, in the hope of finding some way to negotiate. Byron claimed he could help get things back under control, but the Psi Cops had to be removed. Sheridan had no authority to do this. Byron persisted, claiming nothing could be done until the threat of being handed over to the Corps was removed. This plea was interrupted by Bester, who counselled against trusting Byron. Byron was not known for keeping promises. He then addressed Byron directly. Byron was trapped. Even Sheridan would not set a killer free. Byron could stay there and be dug out, or leave and be arrested. He had no other options. Byron disagreed and closed the channel.

Sheridan was angered that Bester had ended the first chance at negotiation they had. Bester believed that action, not dialogue, was what was needed and gave Sheridan a progress report before storming out. Lochley felt Bester *wanted* to confront Byron. And, speaking of desired confrontations, Mr Garibaldi had been almost invisible since Bester returned.

This mystery soon resolved itself as Bester entered his assigned quarters, to be greeted by the whine of Garibaldi's

PPG and a grim, level warning to turn around slowly. He ordered Bester to go the BabCom unit and record a full confession, detailing what Bester and Psi Corps had done to him and Sheridan. Bester refused, claiming Garibaldi would not shoot. Garibaldi insisted he would and would be sure to make it look like self-defence. He gave Bester one more chance to obey and Bester refused. For a few tense moments, Bester seemed to await the killing strike and Garibaldi was poised to deliver it – but found himself unable to pull the trigger. Bester smiled and asked Garibaldi how stupid he thought Bester was. As Bester casually poured himself a drink, Garibaldi tracked him with the PPG, unable to pull the trigger. Bester would not have been so foolish as to let Garibaldi know what he knew and not put in some... safeguards. It was what Psi Corps called an Asimov, after the fictional 'Three Laws of Robotics'. Garibaldi had been programmed to be unable to kill Bester, or to allow Bester to come to harm. The block was deep inside Garibaldi's brain, making it almost impossible for another telepath to remove. Garibaldi could lust after killing Bester as much as he wanted, but his body would not respond to those desires. Bester left to continue his work, while Garibaldi emptied the PPG into the BabCom unit in frustration.

In Downbelow, Byron castigated himself over how quickly his followers fell to violence. If human nature could not be changed – if we could not hope for something better, nobler, kinder – then, what was the point in living? Lyta brought the conversation back to Bester. She too had noticed that Bester's comments to Byron reflected a personal relationship. Byron tried to deflect this line of questioning, but Lyta persisted. Byron told her. He was raised by the Corps, as Lyta was, but unlike Lyta



(who was a P5) Byron was a P12, which meant he was automatically pegged for Psi Cop training. Not only was he a Psi Cop, he was Bester's protégé, his chosen one. This arrangement worked, until an interception of a telepath smuggling operation. The transport was intercepted and the blips were safely returned to a Psi Corps craft. Byron reported an all clear and signalled that they could return home – but Bester was not finished. He wanted to send a message, to make sure no other transports went into the blip-smuggling business. He ordered Byron to open fire on the unarmed and unresisting transport. Byron refused and Bester issued an ultimatum – the mundanes or him. The other Black Omegas swivelled to lock onto Byron's starfury. Byron fired, destroying the transport. When he returned to Psi Corps, he tried to file a report, but no one cared. He fled and swore he would never again allow innocents to be harmed.

Outside, the firefight continued. The Psi Cops, more numerous, better trained and better organised, were driving the telepaths back. The leader of the militant faction, Thomas, decided to up the ante. The station did not care about telepaths, he said, but they did care about mundanes. The group set off to take hostages.

They arrived at MedLab, where Mr Garibaldi had just arrived to discuss neural blocks with Franklin. Before the conversation could continue, the heavily armed militants broke in, terrifying the medical staff and brutally beating Garibaldi. The realisation they had truly valuable hostages – the head of Alliance security and the chief doctor on Babylon 5 – pleased Thomas. He called for an open line to Sheridan to deliver their ultimatum. Either their demands were met, or the hostages, starting with Garibaldi, would die.

Their demands were broadcast over BabCom. They wanted the release of Byron and the others, safe passage to neutral space and the commencement of negotiations towards creating a telepath homeworld. They allowed only two hours to comply.

Watching the broadcast, Byron chillingly saw the same nightmare that began his exodus play out again. Once again, telepaths were preparing to kill innocents, claiming they were nothing but mundanes... but this time, they were doing it in Byron's name. He refused to allow it. He asked Lyta if she could get him to MedLab, by any means. There had to be some passage not blocked off by steel welded from the inside or Psi Cops monitoring from the outside.

In MedLab, Peter, the telekinetic, was taken from his sick bed by two of the militants, who told him that Byron needed him to help guard a passage. Franklin tried to

intervene, claiming Peter was too injured to move. His concern was rewarded by a PPG blast that narrowly missed him. Undeterred, he moved forward, which led to one of the pair supporting Peter to lunge at Franklin. Garibaldi, in turn, tried to help Franklin, but Thomas ended the fight by grabbing a hostage and threatening to kill her and four others, if there was any more trouble. The barely conscious Peter was taken away as Garibaldi swore bloody vengeance if any of the innocents were harmed.

Zack, meanwhile, was leading a security team towards MedLab. Peter used his telekinesis to barrage the strike force with hurled debris, but the effort weakened him. He was left to guard the hallway on his own.

Sheridan met with Bester, who was being smug, even for him. He rarely got a chance to play the 'I told you so' card, and was revelling in it. He told Sheridan that the latest from EarthGov confirmed his jurisdiction, so the game would continue to be played his way. Lochley confirmed this for Sheridan – President Lychenko was 'considering' the request to shut down Bester's operation, but nothing had yet been decided. It would take several hours to decide – far longer than the militant's deadlines. Sheridan feared that an assault on MedLab while Bester was still on station would cause the telepaths to panic and kill the hostages. Lochley then asked if he wanted to try negotiating with terrorists and Sheridan did not reply.

Elsewhere, Byron and Lyta scanned for an unlocked passageway, finally finding one. This led them to the same corridor Peter was guarding. Byron and Lyta went past him.

Meanwhile, Garibaldi tried to reason with his captors. They would gain no sympathy from killing innocents. They were only harming their own cause. Garibaldi offered to work with them, to help them, but they were not interested. To compound matters, Sheridan picked that moment to broadcast his decision – neither the Alliance nor Babylon 5 would negotiate with terrorists. The militants could surrender or face lethal force. Thomas raised his PPG to slay Garibaldi and MedLab was rent by the sound of plasma fire... coming from Byron, who had killed Thomas in order to keep him from killing in his name.

Sheridan paced. His ten minute deadline was almost up, but there had been no reply from MedLab. Sheridan feared that his decision may have cost the life of his friend and Lochley's assurances that he had done the right thing, the *only* thing, were cold comfort.

Byron contacted Sheridan from MedLab to tell him the crisis was momentarily under control. He would release the

hostages, but he demanded, in return, a chance to gather all of his people in Downbelow without interference. If Bester or security intervened, he would not be able to keep them controlled. After this, he and the militants would surrender – to Lochley, not to Psi Corps. Those who had no part in the violence would be allowed to go free. He then assured Sheridan that no one responsible for the violence would escape, that Sheridan would have everything he needed to be sure all those guilty of the assault on MedLab would be accounted for. Lochley agreed to Byron's terms.

A few hours later, a furious Bester confronted Sheridan and Lochley. Lochley stated that because the violence was directed against station personnel, EarthGov had transferred jurisdiction to the station, meaning Lochley now had the authority to do with them what she wished. Zack entered, bearing a stack of identicards and a set of signed confessions, all belonging to those involved in the violence. Sheridan declared the matter over and told Bester to take it up with EarthGov.

Bester, though, went to Brown Sector. He found one of the sealed off doors and placed his ungloved hand against it, probing for those on the other side, looking for Byron. He found him. Byron left the assembled group to meet with his old mentor alone. Though separated by distance, the two conversed. Bester urged him not to go through with it, and tried to convince Byron to come back to him. Despite all that had gone on, they were still family. Byron rebuked him and left with Lyta.

In defiance of Lochley's orders, Bester and the other Psi Cops made their way to Brown 7. They were not leaving without him. Even as Byron and the renegades prepared to surrender, Bester arrived, sending shock, confusion and panic through the crowd. Sheridan and Lochley tried to hold him back, while Byron tried to keep his people controlled, but in seconds, tension flared to violence. PPG fire filled the corridor and in the chaos, a fuel pipe was smashed open, while Byron was wounded by a plasma bolt. Seeing the danger, Lochley called a cease-fire – a stray PPG shot could ignite the volatile chemicals now flooding into the hall.

Byron, almost in tears, said that they could no longer go back. There had been too much blood – they were not who they were, but who they had become – what others had forced them to become. He picked up a fallen PPG. Sheridan guessed his plan and asked him not to go through with it. Byron ignored him and turned to Lyta. He reminded her that, long ago, he had made her promise that when he asked her to leave him, she would. Now was that time and he would hold her to her promise. Lyta had to leave because otherwise, his life would have no meaning.

She had to remain, to carry on his work. In tears, barely able to walk, she turned and walked away, as Byron called the others who had surrendered near to him, raised his PPG, took careful aim at the toxic chemicals pooling around his feet and fired.

Later, in the charred corridor, Security and maintenance performed the grisly task of removing the bodies. Sheridan confronted Bester. Bester was uncharacteristically thoughtful and introspective. He did not understand. He really believed all telepaths were on the same side, that all that was needed was to explain it. Saddened and confused, he walked off.

As he left, Franklin approached. Since Mr Garibaldi was rarely far from trouble, Franklin hoped he would be there. Garibaldi's behaviour in MedLab struck Franklin as odd, and he wanted to talk to him.

The other telepaths, those promised safe passage, were filing out. Lyta met them. She had been given Byron's memories, of contacts, safe houses and escape routes. As each one walked past her, she clasped their hand, intoned 'Remember Byron' and passed along the information they would need.

In his quarters, a shaken and tired Garibaldi listened to the news. While a newscaster described the bombing of Psi Corps headquarters on Mars, Michael opened up a bottle of scotch and began to drink...

Thomas

This statistic block can be used for most of Byron's followers. Adding a level or two of Lurker, Soldier or Telepath can differentiate them if needed.

2nd Level Human Telepath (P5)/1st Level Lurker/1st Level Soldier

Hit Points: 13

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 11 (+1 Reflex)

Attacks: +3 melee or +3 ranged

Special Qualities: Lurker's Knowledge, Weapons Training
Saves: Fort +5, Reflex +1, Will +3

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

Skills: Bluff +2, Climb +6, Computer Use +6, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +5, Hide +4, Knowledge (telepathy) +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Telepathy +6, Spot +6, Survival +4

Feats: Alertness, Gestalt, Run

Abilities: Accidental Scan, Communication, Mind Shield, Sense Telepathy, Warning

Blooding a Psi Cop

While it has never been made official Corps policy, for obvious reasons, it has long been a tradition that a Psi Cop candidate prove himself up to the job by killing a mundane. In most cases, this is a discreet test, where the candidate is given an opportunity and a motive, but is not directly ordered to kill. Often, the scenario is presented so as to give the recruit the chance to come up with the idea on his own – to recognise that, for the good of the Corps, he is going to have to kill in cold blood. Bester is somewhat unique in that he is very open about it – he does not believe telepaths should lie to each other or trick each other.

Those candidates who fail the test are usually shunted to administrative or interrogation duties. Nearly all field-certified Psi Cops have killed at least one mundane in the line of duty, something to bear in mind when considering their likely reactions to letting a potential enemy go free.

Hunger and Telepathy

Telepathy can be physically draining. Under normal circumstances, this drain is minuscule; it takes hours of constant use of telepathic abilities, or especially draining activities, such as deep scans, before a telepath will begin to tire. However, if the body is weakened, so is the mind. Byron's holdouts in Downbelow would have begun to suffer a weakening of their abilities once the food ran out.

For each day in which a character takes subdual damage from lack of food or water (see the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book*), all save DCs are reduced by 1 and the DCs of any telepathy checks are increased by 1. After three days, the effective P-Rating of a character drops by 1, and drops by 1 more for each additional day without food.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Byron is dead. Long live Byron. The power of a living leader is nothing compared to the power of a martyr. Without a real Byron to have human limitations and foibles, those who would follow him can recast him in any

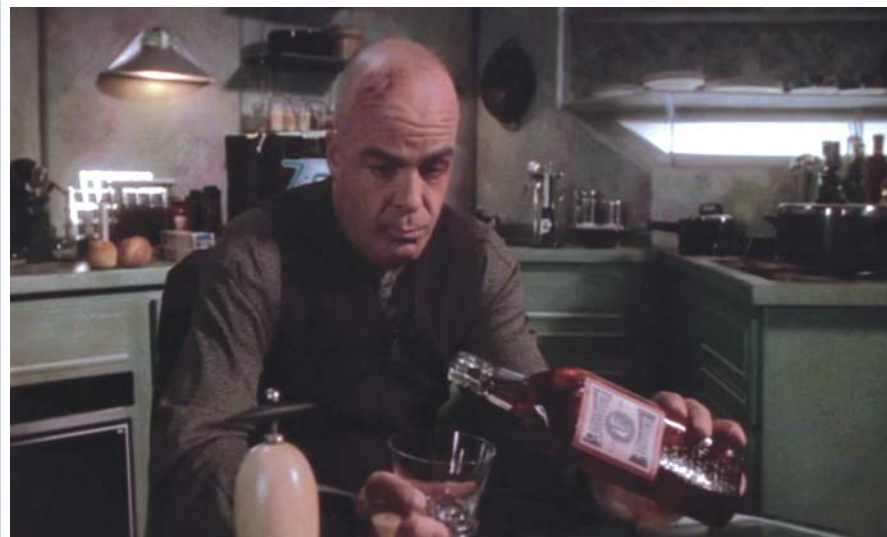


image they wish, (see the section of 'Byronism' above, for some examples).

There are now roughly 100 telepaths roaming the galaxy with a brain full of Byron's contacts, friends and so on... and most of them are going to be fairly low P-Rated. Psi Corps will be especially interested in tracking down any of the former Byronites and reaming their minds clean. Of course, Lyta had to have known this and may have planted false information that would confuse a scanner – potentially leading Psi Cops on a wild goose chase or into a trap.

'Telepath smuggling' is a good way to earn extra money while acting in a somewhat ethical fashion. Many smugglers are honest and will hold up their end of the bargain. However, many of those who agree to help blips escape from the grip of Psi Corps are anything but ethical. They will sometimes abandon their cargo on uninhabited worlds or even dump them into space if it seems Psi Corps may be on to them. Of course, plotting treachery against people who can read your mind is often fatally stupid, so such deals are often conducted entirely via comm channels, with the smuggler never getting into physical, line-of-sight range of the telepaths. Often, the intermediaries are innocents who believe they are sending the blips off to a better life.

Byron Lives! It is a fundamental truism that whenever anyone famous or important dies, there will be those who do not believe it. There are ways in which Byron could have faked his own death, such as using a telepathic gestalt to plant illusions in the onlooker's minds. If Lyta aided him, they could have fooled even Bester. A few more telepathic tricks and Byron could leave the station – or even remain



behind in Downbelow. As a matter of canon, this did not happen – Byron is as dead as last year's fashions at the Royal Court. However, this does not prevent people from believing he still lives. The perception that he still lives can fuel several stories, such as trying to track back legends to their source, or possibly even discovering a scam in which a powerful telepath is pretending to be Byron returned (such a scammer had best be far, far, away from Lyta before he pulls such a stunt, however).

There is going to be an upsurge of anti-Psi Corps terrorism, one that will only get worse. This can involve the characters in a number of ways. Characters who are members of the Corps may be caught in the attacks, or have friends or family killed. Mundanes may have the misfortune of being at a Psi Corps building when a terrorist sets off a bomb. Anyone with a history of anti-Corps activity may be taken in for questioning by local authorities or hunted down by angry Psi Cops. Some of those attacking the Corps are not followers of Byron – they simply took advantage of the moment to vent their grievances and calculate that the 'heat' will be placed on known Byronites, not on them.

The Ragged Edge (June 30th 2262)

Sheridan was in his office, signing paperwork, something which he had discovered was roughly half the job of being President. Delenn entered to remind him of an incipient meeting. When he arrived at the council meeting, he found an empty room. The ambassadors, Delenn said, were boycotting all Alliance meetings until the safety of their shipping could be assured. With each race's fleet

confined to their own borders, only Alliance ships could patrol the places in between, which was where the attacks took place. Further, if the Alliance could not protect its member worlds, why bother belonging? Sheridan agreed they had a point. The Alliance needed a break, a witness, something to help them solve this mystery.

In deep space, the corporate freighter Redstar 9, flying near Drazi space, was under attack. As Redstar 9 was vaporised, a lone lifepod ejected from the firefight...

A Centauri transport bearing G'Kar and Londo arrived at Babylon 5. Londo was oddly relieved to be back on the station and oddly glad to have left Centauri Prime. G'Kar pondered that perhaps Londo simply was not meant to be happy. He was doing his job as bodyguard to its fullest – he would guard Londo's body *and* his spirit, a prospect Londo did not find especially appealing. As they walked, G'Kar noticed that he was being stared at, primarily by other Narn, several of whom even bowed to him.

Garibaldi was sleeping late, only to be awakened by an urgent BabCom message from Zack, who noted Garibaldi was looking unwell. Garibaldi had already slept through an early meeting and was on the verge of being late for another one, called by Delenn. Before leaving for the meeting, Garibaldi casually tossed aside an empty bottle of liquor he found near his bedside.

Delenn had what she hoped was good news. A lifepod had been ejected during the latest attacks, meaning there might be a survivor who could bear witness to the identity of the attackers. There is a complication. A human transport in Drazi space may well have been smuggling goods at the behest of the Drazi government, in violation of Alliance rules. This eliminated any chance of co-operation by the Drazi. However, Garibaldi had a human contact who worked as a security consultant on the Drazi homeworld of Zhabar. He might be able to locate the survivor.

Sheridan ordered Franklin to accompany Garibaldi, an idea Garibaldi rejected. His contact would not trust a stranger, so Franklin would not be allowed to meet with him. Garibaldi insisted on going alone and Sheridan agreed.

Meanwhile, G'Kar approached his quarters through a gauntlet of bowing, almost fawning, Narn. At the end of the line was Ta'Lon, who explained he had been guarding transports bringing supplies to and from homeworld... food, weapons and... other items. A suspicion grew in G'Kar's mind. He entered his quarters and rushed to his desk, to find the draft of the Book of G'Kar missing. Furiously, he turned on Ta'Lon, demanding to know what had become of his book. Ta'Lon explained that when G'Kar left for Centauri Prime, he and other Narn feared G'Kar had been captured and was to be executed. Because of this and because only one copy of the Book of G'Kar existed, the Kha'Ri decided to 'liberate' it. As G'Kar grew ever more furious, Ta'Lon continued, explaining that those who read it were moved and made 'just a few' copies and then a few more and a few more... until, Ta'Lon reluctantly admitted, there were now about half a million copies. G'Kar was now a religious icon on a par with G'Quan.

Garibaldi was preparing to leave for Zhabar when Franklin intercepted him in the docking bay, in order to check on the status of their friendship. Garibaldi assured Franklin everything was still good between them and that the reason he did not want Franklin along was that things could get really bad and he did not want a friend around if they did. Sensing something deeper, Franklin told Garibaldi that if he ever had a problem, he could talk to him.

Londo was drinking in the Zocalo when G'Kar, followed by a group of young, self-appointed acolytes approached. Word of the Book of G'Kar had reached even Londo's ears by this time. Londo was less than flattered to find out he had been included in the book as 'Prideful Windcatcher'.

Garibaldi arrived on the Drazi homeworld, after enduring a flight that had been less than first-class. The city was a place of brown sky and harsh angles, not to mention tip-hungry bellhops. As Garibaldi viewed the alien city from the broad balcony of his room, a soft click behind him brought his instincts – and his PPG – to the fore. Fortunately, it was only his contact, Tafiq Azir, who wished to be sure age had not dulled Garibaldi's reflexes. The two of them caught up briefly before getting down to business. The pilot had survived – but he was in hiding. His human employers were angry at the loss of their freighter and the Drazi who hired him to smuggle in illegal goods planned to exact revenge. The pilot was eager to get off-planet, but actually accomplishing this was going to be difficult. Room service arrived with drinks and Tafiq discussed Drazi traditions – narrow streets to deter invaders, broad balconies that hearkened back to the Drazi's 'outdoor-dwelling' ancestry. Instinctually, Garibaldi started to stop Tafiq from pouring him a drink, then relented and took one. As they drank, Tafiq explained the plan: Tafiq would leave to finalise the

travel plans, then the pilot would meet the two of them in the park at the base of the hotel. There would be a precision signal aimed at the balcony; then the pilot and Garibaldi would meet, talk and the two would leave and Tafiq could get back to his reasonably cushy job.

On Babylon 5, Franklin's dinner was interrupted by a priority message from Earthdome.

Tafiq and Garibaldi had emptied the bottle of green liquor, which left Garibaldi asleep and Tafiq somewhat hazy. Tafiq exited to check on the travel arrangements, but his instincts dulled by alcohol, was easy prey for an assassin waiting in the hall. Some time later, Garibaldi finally roused himself from his stupor. He staggered to the edge of the balcony and saw the signal light. Garibaldi ran to meet his contact, only to find Tafiq slumped in the hall and a Drazi inspecting him. The Drazi lunged to attack Garibaldi and, following a brief but violent struggle which carried them through the room and out to the balcony, Garibaldi managed to pitch his assailant over the edge (where he landed on a lower balcony). He ran to check on his friend, even as a Drazi vehicle bathed that balcony in a spotlight.

Tafiq was dying, but not yet dead – though he knew he would be soon. He urged Garibaldi to find the pilot and then he passed away, as the flying vehicle continued to circle the hotel and the Drazi Garibaldi had fought with scrambled back onto the balcony.

At the base of the hotel, Garibaldi found the pilot slumped in an alley, surrounded by three hooded and cloaked figures. Garibaldi moved to defend the pilot, but was quickly overwhelmed. Surprisingly, they abandoned him, leaving the pilot dead and Garibaldi holding nothing but a gold button he had ripped from one of his attackers. As spotlights filled the ally and a voice intoned instructions in Drazi, Garibaldi fled into the maze of narrow, twisting alleys.

In Sheridan's office, Delenn received an urgent call from Garibaldi – the mission was a wreck. He could not get out via civilian transport. He called for a White Star to meet him outside the city and get him out of there.

The corridor leading to G'Kar's quarters was filled with meditating and praying Narn. Ta'Lon braved the fury of G'Kar to enter and told G'Kar the crowds wanted him to speak to them. G'Kar was not interested – he had already turned down the chance to rule Nar'Shal – why would he want to become a god? It was not his place to lead.

Ta'Lon was not willing to let it go at that. G'Kar had much to teach. For a century, the Narn had taught themselves only



hatred and fighting. G'Kar could teach them something new, something better. The current Narn leadership knew only the old ways. G'Kar still hesitated. He did not wish to be responsible for other lives. Throughout his life, his mistakes would impact only himself; if he took on this position of authority, his errors would harm others. He also feared that people would be drawn to him because of who he was, not what he had to say – that the cult of personality would overshadow the message he had to teach. Finally, G'Kar agreed and allowed the supplicants into his quarters.

Sometime later, the unwilling prophet met with Sheridan, Delenn and Garibaldi to discuss the fate of the latter's mission. Sheridan was displeased that all they had to show for this one chance at a break was a button. One thing he did know was that those who killed the pilot were not Drazis – punching a Drazis hurts a lot more. Whoever it was that killed the pilot knew exactly who Garibaldi was and why he was there. There was a leak.

At this point, Londo entered the room and apologised for his lateness. As he sat down, he noticed the button in Garibaldi's hand and recognised it immediately. It was from the uniform of the Imperial Palace Guard. Garibaldi lied about where he found it and Sheridan moved on to other topics.

Later, the original four met privately. Delenn felt Londo could no longer be trusted. She felt he was probably not directly involved, but he might be inadvertently leaking information to those who were. Delenn was still puzzled. Even if the Centauri were behind the attacks, as seemed increasingly likely, what did they have to gain? They would

not profit from the break-up of the Alliance. G'Kar urged that Londo not be informed of what they knew. He knew Londo would do all he could to track down the source of the problem... and would then be killed. G'Kar related the tale of Londo's near-assassination and how the Royal Palace was split between two factions. Londo was alive only because one of those sides wanted him alive and if he began to dig too deeply into the attacks, that would change.

In MedLab, Franklin recorded a personal log. He had confirmed the information he received earlier from EarthGov.

This information had led him to make one of the hardest decisions of his life.

In the observation rotunda, G'Kar lectured his would-be followers. He preached tolerance and understanding, a message which was not going over well. G'Kar proceeded to demonstrate, via the use of tactile stimulus, why it might be safer to trust a Centauri than a fellow Narn.

Sheridan continued his paperwork, until Franklin interrupted him. Franklin had reached a decision. He had been asked to become the new head of Xenobiological Research for the Earth Alliance and had decided to accept the post. This post would allow him to continue his research on alien diseases and do an even better job at it than he could do on Babylon 5. He would be leaving in a few months, in January 2263.

Zhabar

The homeland of the Drazis is exactly the sort of world one would expect would produce such a race – it is a harsh world filled with predators and storms, a world where survival requires brute strength, but where strength alone is insufficient – to prosper, the Drazis needed to out-think as well as out-fight their foes. They did so and then managed to take their roiling anger out from Zhabar, to carry the struggle to the stars.

There are several large cities on the planet, but only Torvag is generally equipped to handle offworlders. There are a few hotels catering to non-Drazis and a small section of the city is known as 'Nar'Shal ku Zhab' or 'Nar'Shal on Zhabar',

though a more idiomatic translation would be 'Narn Town'. Many Narn expatriates ended up settling on Zhabar over the decades and the population exploded during the War of Retribution. Currently, about 1,500 Narn dwell there, one of the largest Narn populations outside of the Regime.

Zhabar is one of the least urbanised worlds to house a starfaring race. Nearly a third of the Drazi still dwell in rural or wilderness environments, a far cry from the usual 95%+ urbanisation rates of most other homeworlds. Even within the cities, the legacy of the primitive Drazi lives on – their buildings are constructed with small internal areas and large balconies, allowing the Drazi to spend most of their time outdoors. The eternally harsh and ever-changing weather does not phase them.

Tafiq Azir

3rd Level Human Soldier/3rd Level Agent

Hit Points: 27

Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 16 (Reflex +6)

Attacks: +5 melee or +7 ranged

Special Qualities: Weapon Training, Covering Fire, Security Systems, Sneak Attack +1d6

Saves: Fort +6, Reflex +6, Will +5

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

Skills: Climb +4, Disguise +4, Hide +8, Intimidate +7, Move Silently +8, Pick Pocket +8, Sense Motive +5, Spot +6, Technical (Electronics) +10

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

Prior to his untimely death, Tafiq can be found almost anywhere in the galaxy. As a long-time friend of Garibaldi's, he may be a contact Garibaldi will send the characters to meet.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

The Drazi are not alone in their use of smugglers to get around their agreements with the ISA and humans, who are one of the farthest-ranging species in the galaxy, are among the most common in that role. Human shipping corporations and human free traders are not an unusual site from Minbar to Cascor, so no one is likely to pay them much heed. Players can either work as smugglers, dodging Alliance patrols and struggling to stay ahead of other, more violent, criminals or they can work on the other side – finding the holes in the Alliance scanning nets and tracking

down the spaceports where illicit goods are funnelled from system to system under tacit governmental agreement.

The Drazi like to hire human security personnel – so do many other alien races. Humans are considered less likely to fall prey to old feuds, political machinations and cultural taboos; they are considered to be effectively unbiased and are known as generally honourable so long as the payments are good. Such work is well-paid and is often both safe and interesting, at least for xenophiles. A team of characters acting as travelling security consultants would make a fine basis for a game and many Non-Player Characters met in the course of play might turn up unexpectedly on an alien world in such a role, especially if they have the sort of skills required.

While many Narn are willing, even desperate, to study at the feet of the master, some will read the Book once and set off to become prophets themselves, bringing the Word of G'Kar to Narn scattered hither and yon. Players could take on the roles of such self-styled evangelists and their entourage or simply encounter them in the midst of other events, where they can provide a 'b plot', which can be either comedic or tragic as the situation warrants.

Centaury agents stationed on Zhabar were able to track down and nearly kill Mr Garibaldi. Given how secret the events on Centaury Prime are, with few even in the inner circle of the Royal Court knowing about the attacks, this implies that there may well be Drakh on Zhabar as well, accompanied by loyal (or controlled) Centaury Royal Guards. How many other worlds have a clandestine Drakh presence? How many seemingly innocent Centaury travelling the starlanes have been co-opted into being the Drakh's eyes and ears?

Day of the Dead (July 1st 2262)

A shuttle left a transport ship, bringing aboard a large man in slightly archaic dress. As a crowd gathered around him, recording him and viewing him with awe and fascination, he approached the customs desk and declared he had nothing to declare, except his genius. He then opened his luggage to reveal another man, smaller and almost pixyish, who communicated through a handheld device. They were Rebo and Zooty, two of the most famous comedians of the 23rd century, and they had come to Babylon 5 – to Captain Lochley's disgust.

Lochley, Garibaldi and Sheridan were discussing Brakiri religious customs. Garibaldi knew nothing save that the Brakiri feared comets. The Brakiri had asked Lochley to



'sell' them a piece of Babylon 5 for one night, for religious reasons. Meanwhile, the Brakiri on the station were preparing for their upcoming holiday. Said preparations included harassing Londo by attempting to sell him trinkets, such as a candy skull. When the merchant recognised Londo as the incipient Emperor, he asked him who we would wish to meet among the dead. Londo thought a second or two and replied he would like to meet the first Emperor, with whom he would like to discuss some issues. The Brakiri's ever-present grin widened and he offered Londo the candy skull as a gift, and wished that the comet would bring him wisdom that night. As Londo left, the Brakiri told him that tonight, it was the Day of the Dead... that tonight, the dead would return.

Delenn was in her quarters when she received a surprise visitor – Lennier, dressed in the robes of a trainee Ranger. He had returned to see her, of course, but primarily to experience the Brakiri Day of the Dead, which had haunted him since his days as a young priest. Delenn was unaware of it and Lennier explained that it was celebrated once every 200 years and that there were many odd tales associated with it. Delenn was preparing to meet with Sheridan, who was hosting a cocktail party for Rebo and Zooty. Lennier seemed as excited by the prospect of meeting Rebo and Zooty as he was about the Day of the Dead.

Sheridan was giving one of his trademark speeches, discussing the universality of humour and the joy which Rebo and Zooty spread throughout the galaxy and awarded them the freedom of Babylon 5. They then performed a stand-up act featuring broad slapstick, amusing all of the gathered dignitaries, except for Lochley. She excused herself to meet with the Brakiri ambassador. When G'Kar

overheard this, his enjoyment at the comedians' antics was replaced with a worried frown.

In her office, Lochley met with the Brakiri, who gifted her with a candy skull and a comet medallion. The ambassador was concerned about his need to purchase a portion of the station for the evening. Renting was not acceptable – it had to be purchased, to be Brakiri, if only for one night. Lochley was willing to make an exception to normal policy, and agreed to sell them the station. Just as the deal was being completed, G'Kar rushed in, frantically urging her not to do it, warning her of great danger.

Lochley was unmoved and tossed G'Kar's own words in his face, pointing out that the Declaration of Principles which he wrote demanded religious tolerance. The Brakiri ambassador seemed to take some slight pleasure in G'Kar's discomfort. The deal had been completed. Babylon 5 had been sold.

Meanwhile, a weary Garibaldi was receiving a brief lesson in Brakiri customs as well. He was told there was only one comet in the Brakiri system, with a 200-year orbit and when it passed by Brakos, that signified the Day of the Dead. Lines drawn throughout the station demarcated the portion of the station sold to the Brakiri. The ambassador explained that on one side of the line was Brakir, and on the other side, Babylon 5. All Garibaldi cared about was getting to his bed... which happened to be on the Brakiri side of the corridor.

Back on the Babylon 5 side, in their quarters, Sheridan and Delenn welcomed Rebo and Zooty. Zooty's machine spoke to Delenn in high-pitched, but fluent, Minbari, causing her to burst out in laughter. The joke apparently revolved around a failure to reach enlightenment and a small fish. Rebo noted that, in ten years, he had never heard Zooty speak without the machine, save for one word: 'Why'.

As Lieutenant Corwin practised his Rebo imitation, G'Kar asked for permission to sleep in C&C, as his quarters were in what was now Brakiri territory and he did not wish to be there during this night.

Lochley's night was not going any better than her day. Practically every channel on BabCom was featuring Rebo-

and-Zooty centric programming. Outside and throughout the station, as night fell, a shimmering wall of lavender light descended across the lines drawn by the Brakiri. A crimson glow suffused her quarters as well.

Meanwhile, in his own quarters, Londo noted with disgust that the news of Rebo and Zooty's arrival on Babylon 5 was considered of much greater importance than his own forthcoming ascension to the Imperial throne. As he began his nights drinking, he spoke sardonically to a portrait of the first Emperor of the Republic and mused on the fact that being Emperor just did not mean what it used to. If even *Vir* could be emperor, then a small Earth *cat* could be Emperor. As he ranted, his room turned to crimson as well and behind him, the figure of Adira Tyree appeared. She had come back, she said, and Londo was moved almost to tears of joy. He told her he had killed her murderer and that he was to be Emperor – but he would give it all up for her. They embraced.

As Garibaldi lay in his bed, the same scarlet luminescence filled his room. At the sound of his shower turning on, he reached for his PPG and quietly stalked to the bathroom. He demanded that whoever was in there come out, but a female voice bade him to come in, instead. It was Dodger, a GROPOS with whom Garibaldi had had a brief, but passionate, affair. He thought she was dead... and yes, she was. But she missed him, and so she came back for a second chance.

Garibaldi's mind raced to its usual paranoid conclusions – she was a robot, or a clone, or a trick of Bester's. Dodger denied it all. She was her, she was dead and now, for one night, she was back.

Lochley was having trouble raising anyone on her link, when a cough from within her quarters caused her to turn. A young blonde woman, barely more than a girl, really, was there, looking as confused and startled as Lochley – whom she called 'Lizzy'. Lochley looked as if she had been stabbed. It was Zoe, a very old... and very dead... friend.

Unlike the others, Zoe did not seem to be aware of her own death, at least not at first. She had no idea where she was or how she got there. It had been twenty years since Lochley had last seen her... Lochley found her dead in the apartment they had been sharing, dead of a drug overdose. Zoe's death was the trigger that turned Lochley's life around – she stopped using drugs, returned to her family, joined EarthForce and now commanded Babylon 5. Zoe felt being in space was 'cool' and looked around for some drugs. Lochley did not have fond memories of the time they had lived together... they were cold, sick, hungry, willing to do anything to survive. As with Garibaldi, Lochley tried to

find some explanation – perhaps Zoe had been teleported forward in time, from a point before she died? No... Zoe now remembered her death.

Outside Brakiri space, dinner was well underway in Sheridan's quarters, until Corwin called Sheridan away to talk with him privately. A 'piece' of the station nearly a square mile across was... missing. They could not communicate with it or get into it. Lochley could not help... her quarters were within the zone.

So were Garibaldi's. He and Dodger were talking. Garibaldi did not believe in life after death... and neither, it seemed, did the dead woman sitting on his bed. She did not know why she was back, just that she was. Garibaldi wondered if she had any arcane knowledge to bring back from the dead and the best she could offer was the fact that any Emily Dickinson poem could be sung to 'The Yellow Rose of Texas'.

Sheridan attempted to pierce the red veil, but found it impossible.

In his quarters, Lennier meditated. His concentration was shattered by a smooth, deep voice bidding him good evening. It was Mr Morden. Lennier had not met Morden, but knew him, knew he had worked for the Shadows. Morden shrugged and said he had done a lot of things. Mostly, he said, he tried to make people happy and look where that got him. He asked Lennier why he was here and Lennier said he wanted wisdom. Morden felt going to the dead for wisdom was foolish, but he would do what he could. He told Lennier that, firstly, Delenn did not love him and never would and secondly that no one should ever want to talk to the dead. Lennier told him to leave; when Morden refused, Lennier left... or tried to. He got a few steps into the scarlet field outside his quarters and collapsed, gasping.

Morden dragged him back in, informing him the other side of the corridor was millions of light years away. Lennier was confused that someone as evil as Morden was reputed to be would have saved him and Morden noted that Lennier should not believe everything Sheridan said. He also told Lennier that he would betray the Anla'Shok, something Lennier refused to believe. Desperate to salvage something from this experience, Lennier found momentary comfort in the thought he now had proof there was life after death... but Morden shot that down as well and then hinted Lennier would soon know the facts of the matter for himself. Lennier returned to his meditations and refused to continue his conversation.

In Lochley's quarters, Zoe tried to get some kind of fun out of her one night reprieve from oblivion, rooting through Lochley's music, while Lochley tried to contact C&C. Zoe, apparently understanding more of her current status, informed her that the area where they were, was part of the Brakiri homeworld, far from Babylon 5. Lochley did not buy it, but she did re-route emergency power and communications through Epsilon Grid, which restored normal lighting to her room and to the rest of the affected area. This also revealed Lochley's command authorisation passphrase: 'Zoe's dead'.

Garibaldi and Dodger were catching up, oblivious to the change in lighting. Dodger feigned jealousy at the news of Garibaldi's new romance. As the two moved towards an embrace, they were interrupted by a call from Lochley. Dodger leapt to her feet and saluted, giving her name, rank, serial number and 'Killed in Action'. Lochley ignored her and told Garibaldi to patch into the StellarCom relay network to get back to Babylon 5 C&C. Lochley then prepared to make a broadcast to the affected portions of the station to let them know everything was under control.

This broadcast interrupted Londo's brief moment of happiness with Adira. Londo deactivated it brusquely, as Adira sadly informed him that she would be gone in the morning and that he would go on to be Emperor, despite his wishes to the contrary.

Garibaldi, ignoring an attractive, albeit deceased, woman in his bed, was fulfilling Lochley's command and had patched the comm system.

Corwin and Sheridan met in C&C, above the form of a slumbering G'Kar. Sheridan deduced there was a connection between the sale to the Brakiri and the missing station. Meanwhile, back in their quarters, Rebo and Zooty were telling Delenn that they were so impressed with the way that she and Sheridan were handling things they had decided to give up show business and do something more 'worthwhile'. Sheridan entered the room just as this announcement was being made, and Delenn turned to him with consternation. Sheridan convinced them otherwise, that comedy was vital.

Just then, Lochley managed to call in via Garibaldi's communication hack and told him that she was sure the situation would resolve itself soon, when the Brakiri's contract expired. As the fragile communications link collapsed, Sheridan told her to meet him in his office in the morning.

Dawn started to break and the dead prepared to return. Morden said his farewells to Lennier and vanished. Dodger briefly tried to prove her theory regarding Emily Dickenson and the Yellow Rose of Texas, an attempt undermined by the fact she was singing a poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay. Garibaldi sensed the end was near. Dodger kissed him chastely on the forehead, walked out of his room and out of his life.

Zoe was relaying a message to Lochley, a message someone else had given her to relay – a message for Sheridan. Then she confessed her death was not an accident, but a suicide. Assured by Lochley that she did not hate her, she vanished.

Later, Sheridan and Lochley walked together while the Brakiri erased the lines they had drawn. Sheridan tried to get her to talk about her encounter, but Lochley declined, saying it was too personal – something everyone who had experienced such an encounter had said. Sheridan then tried to find an explanation for the night's events and failed. All the usual explanations – telepathy, delusion, psychoactive gas – were trotted out, but none seemed likely. Lochley also had a message for Sheridan – from Kosh: 'When the long night comes, return to the end of the beginning.'



Rebo and Zooty prepared to leave. Zooty covered his machine with his hat, called over Sheridan and whispered five words into his ear: 'Because it tells me to'.

Rebo

10th Level Human Worker (White Collar)/3rd Level Media Star (see Rules Additions chapter)

Hit Points: 18

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 19 (+9 Reflex)

Attacks: +6 melee or +9 ranged

Special Qualities: I'll Mention You To My Producer, Let's Put On A Show, Price of Fame, Salary Increase, Undue Influence, White Collar

Saves: Fort +10, Reflex +9, Will +9

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 17

Skills: Bluff +22, Computer Use +12, Disguise +13, Diplomacy +13, Hide +10, Knowledge (Humour) +19, Listen +19, Move Silently +10, Perform +19, Pick Pocket +10, Profession (Comedian) +22, Sense Motive +5

Feats: Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perform), Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Pick Pocket), Skill Focus (Knowledge (humour))

Zooty

10th Level Human Worker (White Collar)/3rd Level Media Star (see Rules Additions chapter)

Hit Points: 18

Initiative: +4 (+4 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 20 (+10 Reflex)

Attacks: +5 melee or +10 ranged

Special Qualities: I'll Mention You To My Producer, Let's Put On A Show, Price of Fame, Salary Increase, Undue Influence, White Collar

Saves: Fort +10, Reflex +10, Will +9

Abilities: Str 9, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 14

Skills: Appraise +4, Bluff +20, Computer Use +12, Disguise +12, Diplomacy +12, Hide +11, Knowledge (humour) +19, Move Silently +11, Perform +18, Pick Pocket +12, Profession (Comedian) +21, Listen +19

Feats: Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perform), Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Pick Pocket), Skill Focus (Knowledge (humour))

Note: For obvious reasons, 'Perform' was allowed as a class skill for Rebo and Zooty.

Using the Day of the Dead

Any campaign that has been running for a long time will have acquired quite a body count, especially in a system as lethal as that used in Babylon 5. Almost any dead character or Non-Player Character may return, bringing information, wisdom or sarcastic remarks – all three if their name happens to be 'Morden'. This can be an opportunity for intense roleplaying and since it is not going to occur often, selecting who is coming back and what they may have to say, is important.

All of those who returned from the dead had violent or sudden ends – Adira was poisoned, Dodger died in battle, Morden was executed, Zoe committed suicide. This may be a precondition for returning – those who die peacefully, in their sleep, may simply move on to wherever they are supposed to go. Or it may be that what we saw was only a part of it; others in the station may have seen family who did, indeed, die peacefully.

There does not need to be a personal connection. Lennier knew *of* Morden, but had never met him. However, it is generally better if there is a personal link. Someone whom the character knew, loved, hated or killed is much better than a near-stranger. An intermediate step would be to have a Non-Player Character, who is close to one character, appear before another. This can lead to a lot of interesting questions.

While the reuse of a dead Non-Player Character or character is ideal, it is not the only option. A character might encounter someone the player has never met in-game, but who was important to the character in the past. A parent, a teacher, a lover, a rival – anyone whom the character had interacted with and who is now dead, might appear. Asking a player to roleplay a relationship created just for this game session can be a bit much and the Games Master should make sure the player is comfortable with it.

The dead can bring back knowledge, as well. It is not likely that Zoe's message from Kosh, for Sheridan, was the product of Lochley's subconscious. In theory, Morden's prediction for Lennier may have been taken from Lennier's own thoughts, but it is just as likely it was not. This oracular activity may give a Games Master a chance to motivate the Players to take a course of action or obliquely warn them about upcoming events. Specificity is to be avoided and predictions should be couched in vague, open-to-interpretation terms.



Mechanics

Trying to apply rules to a phenomenon deliberately set up to be broadly open to interpretation is an exercise in frustration, but the Babylon 5 roleplaying game is a *game*, after all and games need rules or, at least, guidelines. These are stated below. Games Masters should feel free to interpret or modify as they see fit.

The returned are more-or-less identical to what they were shortly before their death. Their knowledge of the world after their death varies. Zoe was barely aware that she *was* dead, but slowly seemed to realise it – or perhaps she knew it all along and was letting information out slowly. They have all the knowledge and skills they had at the point of their death and, presumably, could use them, including combat skills. It is not obvious what might happen if someone kills the dead – most likely, they would either take no damage from any attack or they would ‘die’ again and their newly-dead body would remain until the Day of the Dead ends, at which point it would vanish.

Any items the dead have with them, vanish when they do. Any items given to them remain behind. Consumed food or drink are exceptions.

The returned have all of the physiological reactions they did when alive. They can get drunk, engage in sex, sweat, etc. For almost all purposes, they should be treated as being alive.

Telepaths can scan the returned as they would anyone else. However, if a telepath deep scans the returned or if the returned concentrate on the moment of their death while

undergoing a surface scan, the telepath is treated as having performed a deathbed scan.

Returned telepaths of P5 and above may attempt to project the moment of their death, provided they have the Communicate ability. The target must make a Will save or suffer the same effect as if he were a telepath performing a deathbed scan.

Characters do not have to be on Babylon 5, or Brakos, to experience the Day of the Dead. Anywhere that there are many Brakiri, they are likely to perform the same deal that they did on B5. This can be

interesting if, for example, there are Brakiri travelling on a freighter the characters own. Refusal to sell the property to the Brakiri for the night, especially if there is no way for the Brakiri to go elsewhere, could result in violence or threats. Remember, for the Brakiri, this is not merely a once-in-a-lifetime experience, but a once-in-six-generations experience. Desperate times call for desperate measures.

Tchotchkes

Most races have, over time, added commercial elements to major holidays, from the human Winter Festival of Consumption to the Centauri Empire Day. The Brakiri, no slouches when it comes to commerce, are no exception. Anywhere there are Brakiri, Players may encounter any of the following for sale:

- Candy skulls: ½ credit
- Chocolate comets: 1 credit
- Silver Comet medallion: 12 credits
- Gold Comet medallion: 40 credits
- Jelly skulls (in 15 exciting colours and flavours): 1 credit/bag
- Book of Meditations: 3 credits
- Guide to Brakiri astronomy: 4 credits
- Comet holograms: 2 credits

Since the comet is normally a symbol of ill-fortune among the Brakiri, this flood of comet-themed merchandise occurs only during the week or so preceding the Day of the Dead and such artefacts may be worth quite a bit to collectors within a few years.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

As with several other episodes in Season 5, this one is very atypical. As such, using the themes involved can be difficult, but it can be very rewarding if done properly.

Even if the Players do not experience the Day of the Dead, the aftermath may still impact them. Those who did experience it may be changed and most likely for the better. An arch-rival may attempt to make peace. A Non-Player Character who has wronged a character may make amends, or at least apologise. Even those who have no relationship to the characters may find a use for them – a dead relative may have revealed where the family jewels were hidden, or asked that a mission be performed in his name.

Rebo and Zooty are popular entertainers who perform both tri-vids and live shows – and entertainers need an entourage! While none was visible in DOTD, it is almost certain they were attended by PR flacks, bodyguards and so on. Players can fill this role, or similar roles for other celebrities. Indeed, a campaign can be centred on a character-celebrity and his retinue of helpers, associates and hangers-on, as they travel from world to world. With the dramatic increase in interplanetary travel brought on by the development of the ISA, entertainers will find they have a wide range of new venues to explore. A ‘goodwill tour’, composed of representatives from many species, may ply the starlanes to communicate the commonality of art, music or laughter. Religious authorities or social conservatives might protest the arrival of ‘alien’ or ‘subversive’ entertainment. The young may become fanatical devotees, dressing like their idols or even using plastic surgery to look like them. One such incident on Beta Durani was the inspiration for the 2259 smash comedy ‘Planet of the Zooties’. Filming ‘on location’ in the jungles of Janos-7 or the ice mines of Europa offers other dangers. Celebrities are also targets for assassination – those who have no fame of their own often wish to gain it by killing someone famous.

Following the Day of the Dead, con artists will come crawling out of the hull plating. Some will claim they have messages from beyond, often involving the transfer of large sums of money. Many will claim they can call the dead back as well.

All of the psychological manipulation techniques used by 20th and 21st century frauds will be used, supplemented by advanced technology and the fact that the Day of the Dead convinced many sceptics that there is *something* beyond life.

While the Command Staff of Babylon 5 might simply accept the events as a mystery never to be solved, others will not be so sanguine. Psi Corps might feel telepathy was somehow involved and want to get to the bottom of it. The rich and powerful, who fear death, may also wish to find some way to assure they can ‘come back’ at will. The utility of talking to the dead in espionage cannot be overstated. Players may become involved in such investigations, which will most likely lead to Brakiri space. This is a good opportunity to open up a Brakiri-centric story line or give Brakiri characters a chance to play on their home turf. The extended information on the Brakiri in the League of Non-Aligned Worlds Fact Book would be helpful here.

What *is* Zooty’s machine? Shadow tech? Vorlon tech? Just a fancy noisemaker?

The Corps Is Mother, The Corps Is Father (July 14th 2262)

Bester walked within the halls of Psi Corps Headquarters, past signs inscribed with ‘Obey’ and ‘Trust The Corps’. He was introduced to two new Psi Cop interns – Lauren Ashley and Chen Hikaru, who were nervous at meeting a figure as revered as Bester. They were to be paired with



Bester to complete their training, then be sent out in the field on their own.

Chen was eager to read Bester's report on the Babylon 5 situation. He was concerned about how unfriendly Babylon 5 was to Psi Corps. Bester acknowledged this and commented that the Psi Cops only go there in the event of an emergency. Lauren thought B5 was Bester's main assignment, an idea Bester found humorous. Babylon 5 was not, contrary to what its residents thought, the centre of the universe.

Meanwhile, in another part of the vast complex, a young man babbled to himself and shuffled papers on his desk as if searching for something. Almost by accident, he found a brochure for Babylon 5. This seemed to end his internal debate and he left the room, leaving behind the clutter of papers... and a bloody corpse.

Bester continued to show his new pupils around, showing them, among other things, two trainees engaged in scan-block exercises. A field agent, he explained, would need to be able to hold a block up for a full hour – the maximum an untrained telepath could sustain a scan. The trainees were astounded at the inner brutality of the struggle, despite the physical calm both men evinced. Bester assured them they would get used to it – indeed they would have to. Level 12 investigations, which they were training for, would put them against the most brutal rogues, who would do anything to escape. Kill them, burn their brains, turn them into vegetables. However, Bester cautioned that ruthlessness on the part of the Psi Cops should be a last resort only. Rogues were still telepaths, still part of the family. A Psi Cop was not hunting rogues, but *saving* them and eventually the rogues would appreciate it. The Psi Corps' propaganda film made this point as well, showing a reformed 'blip' praising the Corps. Before the film could play for too long though, Bester received a message and asked his two new partners to follow him.

They entered the room with the murdered man. Bester knew the dead man – he was a student of Bester's. The campus had been sealed, but the murderer – the man's roommate – was most likely long gone. Bester was assigned to the case, firstly because the killer was a P10 and secondly because the victim was a friend.

Bester was in his quarters when Lauren arrived unexpectedly. The sight of a dead telepath had unnerved her and she needed to talk to someone. Bester told her that he too never got used to the sight of a dead body... if it was a telepath. Mundanes were another story. Since they did not value each other's lives, why should the telepaths? Bester then discussed his childhood – his parents died when he

was a month old and a routine DNA scan had revealed he was a telepath. The Corps raised him practically from birth and taught him that telepaths had to watch out for each other, that they were all responsible for each other.

He gently rebuffed Lauren's attempt at intimacy and sent her back to her room. No sooner had the door closed than there was a knock upon it. Bester's superior entered, bearing the news that the suspect had been traced, heading to Bester's 'favourite place in the universe' – Babylon 5.

At a briefing, the senior Psi Cop gave out more details. The suspected killer was Jonathan Harris, rated P10. There was no known motive for the attack. He was somewhat poor, so his ability to travel was limited. Bester and his team were ordered to Babylon 5, in the hope that Harris would be unable to leave the station due to lack of funds. The other Psi Cops in the briefing were told to perform background checks and try to find other likely destinations. Chen asked why the crew of the transport ship could not apprehend him and he was reminded that a P10 could easily evade mundanes. Furthermore, bringing in mundanes would spoil the carefully cultivated illusion of infallibility that surrounded Psi Corps, an illusion that served to keep mundanes at bay.

As the rest of the Psi Cops left the room, Bester was called aside. The suspect was also trained in attack methods – he was a mind-shredder, who could kill with a thought.

In his quarters, Bester attempted to put himself into the mind of his quarry, tried to figure out what had motivated him. His reflections were interrupted by Chen, who alerted him that it was time to go.

In a seedy casino in Downbelow, a poker game was in progress. Harris seated himself at the table, and introduced himself as someone who had never played before, but was eager to learn. The sharks, sensing easy meat, welcomed him.

Meanwhile, deep in hyperspace, a Psi Corps mothership had ferried Bester and the trainees to within easy reach of the Babylon 5 jumpgate. In Downbelow, Harris pocketed his considerable winnings and left the casino, unaware he was being closely watched.

Zack, elsewhere, was greeting Bester. Bester weathered the usual string of insults and informed Zack that he was on Babylon 5 to track down a murderer who had killed a Psi Cop, something Zack did not consider to be much of a crime. A telepathic comment from Bester brought smiles to Lauren and Chen and confusion to Zack.



at the casino, where Harris won a lot at blackjack. This puzzled Lauren. Scanning alone was not enough to make a good gambler – you had to know the game and telepaths were barred from gambling, meaning few of them were any good at it, telepathy or no. Bester realised the victim was not chosen at random – Harris had found someone with a skill for gambling and ripped it from his mind. As he was digesting this, Zack informed him another body had shown up in MedLab and he had a ‘hunch’ Bester’s subject was involved.

One of the men from the poker game confronted Harris in an empty corridor, claiming Harris had cheated. The confrontation tipped Harris over the edge. He began yelling at himself and flailing at boxes, then turned his anger at his attacker. In seconds, Harris killed the man. Another man, one who had been watching Harris in the casino, silently observed this as well.

Bester found a Drazi fence who had bought some goods from Harris. The Drazi tried to give Bester a false lead, but Bester casually plucked Harris’ true location from his mind. Before they could arrest Harris though, they needed B5 security to open the room he was in. Bester went to find a BabCom unit, leaving the trainees behind with instructions not to confront Harris.

No sooner was he out of sight, then Chen decided to ‘show initiative’. He used some hacking gear to break open the door to Harris’ quarters, over Lauren’s protests. Reluctantly, Lauren agreed to back him up as he entered.

The room was dark and sparsely furnished, typical for Downbelow. As Chen entered the shadows, he tripped over something on the floor. He opened his eyes to find himself face-to-face with a corpse.

Security was called and an investigation begun. The body had been there for two days, despite Zack’s needling of Bester over the short time between Bester’s arrival and the first corpse. The body belonged to a small-time gambler, one whose identicard had been used several times since his death, presumably by Harris. Bester told Zack he had no explanation for why Harris would have chosen this target – probably just chance. The identicard had been used

Franklin seemed to confirm this. Half of the victim’s brain cells had erupted from the inside. With no other explanation, it seemed likely it was Harris’ doing. Bester was not convinced. Only a P12 could do that kind of damage; Harris was a P10. Bester assured Franklin that there was no chance a mistake had been made in the tests but as soon as he and the others were alone, his mood changed. He was worried about something, but he needed to confirm it before he said anything. He told Lauren to get on the line to the main office and to send him everything they had found in Harris’ room. Chen, in turn, was told to check out the other gambling dens on B5, away from the main casino, with instructions to avoid Harris no matter what. Bester, meanwhile, would make sure Harris had not already fled the station.

In Downbelow, Chen walked through the casino. The bartender was unhelpful, but Chen spied the suspect at a table. Remembering his instructions this time, he left the casino to place a call to Bester. Before the call could be completed though he was stabbed by the man who had been trailing Harris.

Zack debriefed Bester. Chen had been killed by a stab wound through the heart. Zack offered condolences, but Bester coldly rejected them. Taken aback, Zack continued; saying there were no witnesses and the only thing they had to go on was a brief image taken by the BabCom unit, showing a tattoo on the killer’s hand.

In a small room, Harris and the killer, who was named Bryce, split their take. Bryce took 10 percent of Harris’ winnings, as payment for having the contacts and connections necessary to set up games that Harris could

win at. All Harris wanted was the money to leave. Bryce asked what Harris was running from. He knew people were looking for him. Harris had no idea what was going on. His last memory was of being in the testing centre... then, suddenly, he was on Babylon 5. All he knew was that he could not go back.

In their quarters, Bester and Lauren went over the reports from the home office. Bester was growing more and more puzzled. The papers were all in different handwriting, using different names, as if they had come from two different files. Lauren found a video record, of the last training session between Harris and his roommate. In the video, Harris suddenly leapt from his chair and began to pace around the room, turning and shouting at nothing. As Bester watched the video over and over he realised that Harris was speaking about himself in the third person. He had multiple personalities and one of those personalities was rated P12. This was the motive for the murder – his roommate had seen one of the other personalities and ‘unstable’ telepaths were locked away for life. Bester told Lauren to check station records against the names of Harris’ other personalities, as seen on the notes found in his quarters.

This led to security, and Bester, tracking down and finding Bryce and Harris. As plasma bolts sizzled through the air, Bester tried to convince Harris that he could be helped, that it would all be OK. Harris refused to go back, but another round of fire left both Bester and Bryce injured. Harris was easily taken out, as a less aggressive personality had come to the fore.

In MedLab, Franklin treated Bester’s injuries. Lauren reported that Psi Corps had authority over the prisoners, and both were sedated for the trip home.

The shuttle moved into hyperspace, where Lauren praised Bester’s devotion to their people. It would be a six hour trip before they could rendezvous with the Mothership and there was still the mundane to deal with. Lauren volunteered to handle it and, in a few seconds, Bryce had been ejected into hyperspace. Bester was proud of her – she might be Psi Corps material after all.

Lauren Ashley

1st Level Human Telepath (P12)

Hit Points: 7

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 11 (+1 Reflex)

Attacks: –1 melee or +1 ranged

Saves: Fort +2, Reflex +1, Will +6

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

Skills: Computer Use +6, Concentration +6, Knowledge (Telepathy) +4, Sense Motive +4, Telepathy +7

Feats: Defensive Block, Iron Will

Telepathic Abilities: Accidental Scan, Mind Shield, Sense Telepathy, Warning

Lauren is barely out of basic training, but she has already got what it takes to be a Psi Cop. As it is, she might show up almost anywhere full Psi Cops are, rapidly gaining levels. Figure 3-4 levels per year, given the intensity of Psi Cop training.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

An all Psi Corps campaign is eminently playable, but discussing this is beyond the scope of this book. *The Psi Corps* supplement provides everything needed for such a campaign.

This episode showed a side of Bester rarely seen elsewhere. Among his own kind, his own people, Bester is no villain. He is compassionate, funny, sensitive, caring and philosophical. There is little trace of hypocrisy or manipulation in how he deals with his recruits; he evinces genuine compassion for them and clearly sees himself in a paternal role. This brings up a vital and oft-forgotten point: No one is evil in their own mind. The Babylon 5 universe is notably free of cackling madmen and evil overlords; there are a few individuals who are truly insane, but most people, even the thugs in Downbelow or the Shadows, have motives for their actions which make sense to them. Putting this into play can be interesting: have the characters see a nemesis or foe on his ‘off-hours’ – talking with friends, playing with his children, helping a kitten out of a tree. Someone can be evil and still be ‘human’.

The reverse is also true – someone can be human and still be evil. The episode ‘set up’ Lauren as wholly sympathetic – young, perky, idealistic – and instead of the expected ending (where she learns Bester is evil and becomes a blip) we see instead that she is as cold-blooded a killer as he is, at least when it comes to mundanes. A common theme in Babylon 5 is tolerance for those *not like us* – it is easy to be friendly, helpful, caring and so on, towards those of ‘our kind’ – our family, our neighbours, people in our social class or ethnic group or religious faith. It is equally easy to hate, without reservation, those *not* of ‘our kind’. Playing this up; showing characters who have two very different faces, based on who they are dealing with can illuminate this.

The possibility of an undetected telepath entering a high-stakes poker match ought to terrify any honest (or dishonest) gambler. As for the latter, the use of telepaths to detect cheats is something few casino owners have not thought about. The recent flood of blips, thanks to Byron's spreading movement has put a lot of 'freelance' teeps 'on the market' and some will certainly see games of seeming chance as a way to help fund either their escape to freedom or anti-Corps terrorism. The Psi Corps officially bans its members from any gambling, but covert ops will be trained in it (so they can fund themselves if necessary) and of course, rogues will ignore such restrictions. Legitimate casino owners will not hire non-Corps teeps, but those who run somewhat downscale operations may prefer having a blip surreptitiously on the staff. A cocktail waitress or croupier has many opportunities to casually touch patrons, doing impromptu surface scans for thoughts of deception. In some legitimate high-stakes games, such as the Earth-Centauri Poker Championship, all participants are required to take psi-blockers for the duration of the game... just in case.

Meditations on the Abyss (September 12th 2262)

'The only way to get pertinent information is to ask impertinent questions.'

Delenn, wide awake, watched her husband sleep. A small crystal glowed by their bedside, alerting her to something and she silently left the bedroom. Not silently enough, though – Sheridan awoke. She told him that she had to get some documents from her quarters and since she could not fall asleep, she would get them now. Sheridan accepted this excuse. Delenn, however, did not go to her quarters. Hooded, she entered a sleazy bar in Downbelow, where she attracted the attention of a lecherous drunk. After he refused to leave when asked politely, she broke a finger. His attempt to escalate the violence was prevented by a few swift blows from Lennier, who had finally arrived. Delenn needed him for something, and so he was there.

He did not, however, understand why Delenn needed to meet secretly, in a dark corner of Downbelow. Secrecy was the reason, she explained. No one, most especially Sheridan, must know. She wanted Lennier to help her. Garibaldi had found reasons to suspect the Centauri were behind the attacks on Alliance shipping, but there was no *proof*. Lennier was asked to find hard evidence, evidence they could use to confront the Centauri. There were other Rangers in the area, but only Lennier had extensive experience with the Centauri. He was charged with patrolling the borders, watching for anything suspicious. Delenn also explained that if John knew, he would forbid it, out of friendship for Lennier and concern that someone close to Delenn might be lost.

Delenn gave Lennier some data crystals containing more information on his mission and told him that not even the captain of the White Star to which he was assigned knew of his true assignment. Lennier left, unwilling to stay and talk, even though Delenn missed him. Before he left, he told her of his vision of Morden, explained that Morden told him he would one day betray the Rangers. Delenn could not think of anything which could incite such a betrayal and Lennier said that he could not, either... but it was evident that he *could*: his unrequited love for Delenn.

In his quarters, Londo pondered documents. The door chimed and, without looking up, Londo told whoever was outside to come in. What entered was, seemingly, a mobile wall of cartons. Only a desperate plea for help from behind the packages identified the carrier as Vir. With Londo's long absence, the larder of the ambassadorial suite was bare and needed re-supplying. Vir, when on his own, ate at McBari's, under the sign of the golden headbones. Londo



did not like this. Someone in Vir's position, he said, should not eat at such a place. Vir was puzzled: Position? What position? Before Londo could explain further, though, a beeping noise from a wand-like device alerted him to the presence of a spying device in the room, attached to some goods Vir had purchased from a Drazzi merchant. Having found it, Londo then proceeded to loudly narrate a tale about the sexual proclivities of Drazzi females, then crushed the bug.

Vir was puzzled as to why their fellow Alliance members would spy on them, but Londo dismissed it as mere politics before picking up where he had left off, in regards to Vir's position. Vir would be the new Ambassador to Babylon 5, once Londo was Emperor.

Lennier introduced himself to Captain Montoya, who was impressed by Lennier's resume and promptly introduced him to Findel, another Minbari Ranger trainee. Montoya had also named his ship, unofficially, *Maria*, after his late sister. 'White Star 27', it seemed, lacked something.

G'Kar, at the council meeting, had good news – his new eye had arrived. The Drazzi ambassador, however, had darker news. Drazzi shipping lines had been attacked again and he suspected that Sheridan had a good idea who the attackers were, even going so far as to name the Centauri as suspects. Sheridan promised that if there were absolute proof of who was behind the attacks, it would be released. The Drazzi grudgingly promised patience, but also reminded Sheridan that, once the culprit was known, the Alliance had promised to support any action recommended by the member races.

Meanwhile, Londo had arrived. After a jibe at the Drazzi, he commented that someone 'terribly inept' had tried to plant a listening device in his quarters and he was here to warn the other members of the Advisory Council to be on the watch for similar actions, while taking several opportunities to insult the Drazzi.

Findel had been sent to find Lennier. The two of them were to take a pair of fighters and scout the area. Findel was frustrated that no more detail had been given, but Lennier explained this was how humans encouraged their trainees to show initiative and to respond to the unexpected. Minbari training techniques were more rigid. Lennier offered to help Findel deal with human customs, but Findel was not interested.

G'Kar, meanwhile, was getting his eye changed. As Franklin worked on the eye, he praised G'Kar's book, praise which G'Kar had trouble accepting. G'Kar had not wanted the book published until his death. Franklin was also puzzled about the circular stain on page 83. G'Kar explained that all Narn holy books are reproduced *exactly* – every smudge and error included. The circular stain was the result of Mr Garibaldi resting his coffee cup on the draft manuscript. Franklin told G'Kar that his interest in the book was due to his Foundationist beliefs and that he would like to attend some of G'Kar's weekly religious meetings.

The *Maria* exited hyperspace and Lennier and Findel launched their fighters. A routine systems check showed that the atmosphere systems were at reduced capacity, only one hour of air remaining – despite the fact that a pre-launch check had indicated the systems were full. Findel urged a return to the ship, but it had already entered hyperspace.

The pair had one hour of air and a three day journey to the nearest world. Lennier urged entry to a meditative state to prolong the air supply, but a nervous Findel was unsure if he could calm himself.

G'Kar was teaching. He stressed that humour was important and from laughter would come wisdom. An acolyte, not grasping this, asked seriously what 'truth' and 'God' were. G'Kar tried to deflect the question, then answered with a deep and meaningful metaphor, which the student did not understand. Finally,



G'Kar provided a meaningless cliché and this satisfied the students.

Lennier's meditations were interrupted by Findel, who was descending into panic. Findel began to pilot his ship away, desperate to find air, when the *Maria* emerged from hyperspace. Montoya ordered the two trainees to report to him and began to explain the lesson he had just taught. They may very well be abandoned in battle – if the ship's mission was endangered then the ship would leave. The test had been to evaluate their response to such abandonment. Lennier had acted correctly.

In the Zocalo, Vir upbraided the Drazzi merchant who had planted the bug. The merchant denied it, but Vir persisted. The Drazzi attempted to bully Vir into leaving and, apparently, it worked. Vir left... all the way to his quarters, where he grabbed a sword from the wall, returned to the Drazzi, smashed his stall, and forced an apology from him. As security broke up the fight, Londo looked on, along with Sheridan and Delenn. Londo was pleased; *now* Vir was truly ready to be an Ambassador for the Centauri!

Elsewhere, the *Maria* had taken station in a red giant system, where the collapse of several outer-system gas giants had left behind an unusually dense asteroid belt. Thirty-nine homing devices had been hidden among the rocks and they needed to be found and destroyed. The mission required ten such devices to be destroyed per trainee... but there were *four* trainees, so someone would have to fail. Montoya felt competition was good. Findel felt he was being singled out for failure. He had joined the Anla'Shok more out of duty than desire and Lennier cautioned him that without full commitment, he would never succeed.

The four craft entered the belt, a region of giant, tumbling rocks painted in shades of scarlet by the blazing red star. As the ships wove through the flying mountains, hunting the elusive homing beacons. Lennier was doing well and the other two trainees were close behind, but Findel had scored zero. His ship had veered away from the rest and he began a suicide run against a particularly large asteroid. Lennier pursued Findel and tried to dissuade him, but Findel was not listening. Lennier then blasted Findel's engines and moved to batter his ship away from its suicide course, nearly killing himself in the process.

Montoya was furious in the debriefing. To him, it seemed Lennier had attacked Findel without cause. Lennier quickly spun a tale of weapons systems malfunctions and accidental encounters, something Montoya had trouble accepting. Angrily, he failed Lennier and then he turned to Findel. He had an assignment for the trainee – to work in recruiting on Minbar, to judge if new volunteers truly

wanted to be Anla'Shok. His job would be to not let anyone join who was there for the wrong reasons, a task Montoya felt he was uniquely suited for.

Off the record, Montoya praised Lennier's actions. He also taught Lennier another valuable lesson – private channels were not as private as Lennier thought.

Zack recounted Vir's battle against the Drazzi while he, Sheridan, Delenn and Franklin ate dinner. Vir was set free with only a warning, as the Drazzi did not wish to press charges, for obvious reasons. Sheridan mused that he wished the Drazzi *had* bugged Londo. The Advisory Council could not act in so underhanded a fashion, but at least there would have been some information gained. Delenn, however, felt Londo was not in the loop on the raids, which was itself worrisome. It meant factions back home were acting without Londo's knowledge, which meant it had to come from above the office of the Prime Minister. There was also the fear that the other worlds would eventually act without proof. At most, they had a month before the other worlds would take action, shattering the Alliance. Still, a month was a long time, in which much could be accomplished. Sheridan wondered where Garibaldi was... he had been invited to this dinner.

The head of Alliance Intelligence was, in a word, plastered, splayed drunkenly on the floor of his quarters singing to himself.

Captain Enrique Montoya

5th level Human Officer (fleet)/3rd level Anla'Shok Ranger

Hit Points: 21

Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: +6 (Reflex +6)

Attacks: +9 melee, +10 ranged

Special Qualities: Die For The One, Fearless, Garb of Honour, Rallying Call, Places Unseen, The Application of Terror

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +9

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +5, Diplomacy +13, Gather Information +5, Hide +5, Intimidate +10, Pilot +11, Sense Motive +13, Spot +10

Feats: Alertness, Alien Empathy (Minbari), Data Access, Improved Initiative, Nerves of Steel, Resist Scan, Spacecraft Proficiency, Veteran Spacehand

Standard Equipment: Ranger garb, fighting pike, PPG

McBaris

Humans have always loved exotic foods, especially if they are insufficiently unusual. McBaris is one of a set of themed restaurants offering 'Alien food at down-to-Earth prices!' The quality of the food is exactly what one would expect and the authenticity is the same. Still, for those whom authentic alien cuisine is either too pricey, too alien or both, the 'Sign of the Golden Headbones' can be a welcome promise of inexpensive, lukewarm mediocrity. McFlarn, Fried Jeshta and Se n'Kai Shakes are among the top sellers. Other restaurants owned and operated by the same corporation (Kroc-Thomas Associates) include McNarn and McTauri (home of the Spooowich!). A typical meal at any of these places costs five credits and offers none of a days supply of vitamins and minerals, but several day's supply of salt and grease. Dr Franklin's monograph on 'Sodium And Cholesterol Hypermetabolisation in Alien Species', published in edited form as 'What Even A Pak'ma'ra Cannot Stomach!', has been roundly praised by health activists and condemned as 'biased rubbish' by KTA.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Ranger training (again): The millennia of refined rituals which defined the Anla'Shok learning process is over. With the expanded, multi-racial Ranger Corps, a wide range of highly idiosyncratic methods of training are being tried. Each trainer has his own ideas about what works and what does not and the cultural assumptions of one species often seem 'alien' to another. Ranger trainees may be placed under the command of a human, Minbari, or even a Drazi or Centauri or, in time, a Pak'ma'ra! Any of these may have their own special lessons to impart. A Drazi will teach about endurance through any degree of pain. A Centauri will give instructions in social manipulation and deceit, skills as important as fluency with a fighting pike. A Pak'ma'ra can tell you how not to be seen, how to find knowledge from the bottom of society, rather than the top. Ranger training is not sadistic, but it is hard-edged, and while every precaution is taken to prevent death, those who join the Anla'Shok do so knowing their lives might end in the line of duty even during the simplest of exercises.

Bugs: Spying on ambassadors for other governments is a long and ancient tradition. Technically illegal and a violation of most treaties, it is so commonplace that no one generally attempts to press charges. Indeed, if a government made more than the usual perfunctory fuss over listening devices, many might decide it had something *really* big to hide and redouble their efforts. However, in most cases, it is all part of the game. Players who regularly deal with ambassadors in various roles may be offered small

(or large) sums of money to leave the occasional bug where the ambassador is not likely to notice it.

While G'Kar's teaching sessions do not last long, they were very popular while they did last and attracted a number of non-Narns. A Player who asks intelligent or insightful questions may draw G'Kar's attention in a positive way, leading to more personal interaction.

Vir's appointment to Ambassador can mean big things for characters that were friendly with him – and trouble for those who were not. For all his apparent bumbling and humility, Vir is still Centauri at heart and will not forget a slight once he has the power to correct it. Anyone who took advantage of him, especially fellow Centauri secure in the protection afforded them by greater rank or prestige, had best watch out. By the same token, those who supported him, especially those who took risks to do so (such as aiding him with the Linconi scam), stand to gain in prestige and power.

Darkness Ascending (September 18th 2262)

Garibaldi wandered alone through the smoking ruins of the Zocalo. Sheridan's corpse, bloodied, lay sprawled nearby, the words 'You Failed Me' written in blood. A badly injured Franklin crawled through the rubble and told Michael they had needed him before a crackling bolt of energy killed him, as well. Mocking laughter echoed through the halls. Garibaldi demanded to know who was out there and was confronted with... himself. He screamed and awoke to find himself staring at Lyta, sitting on his bed, her eyes glowing bright white. She told him that she had decided to stop hiding what the Vorlons did, testing her limits. She was surprised he had awakened and told him, 'This is just a dream'.

Garibaldi screamed and awoke... alone... but not for long. The door slid open and Lise Hampton-Edgars entered, not significantly put out by the loaded PPG aimed at her.

She had been given a passkey by Garibaldi, when he left Mars for B5 for 'just a few weeks'... over half a year before. She just wanted to surprise him. Garibaldi asked if she had seen anyone leave, which she had not, then asked what she was doing here. She had no reason – she just wanted to see him. She also noted he looked like hell.

In the Council offices, Delenn accepted a secure message from Lennier, still stationed on the *Maria*. There had been

more attacks in that area, all random. Twenty hours prior to each attack though, they had received coded Centauri signals. They might have been orders for the attacks... or they might have been anything else. Lennier would try to decode them. He asked if Sheridan knew about his mission yet. Delenn replied that he did not but even as she said this, Sheridan entered the room, then hung back to listen.

Lyta talked to an IPX representative and asked him to consider her proposition. All his company needed was to provide an explorer ship which could hold a few hundred telepaths. *Rogue* telepaths, he sneered in reply. In return, she offered an advantage to their expedition. Psi Corps only allowed one telepath per ship and even then they were only allowed to perform first contacts. A ship filled with 200 telepaths could explore and analyse a world much more quickly than a crew of mundanes and all they asked in exchange was that if they found a liveable world with no other life forms they be allowed to colonise it. The IPX representative flatly turned her down. He was interested, but if he complied Psi Corps would pull their contracts and he would lose the telepaths he already had. He was sympathetic, but there was nothing he could do. Lyta would need someone with more resources and fewer pre-existing obligations. He wished her luck in that and left.

However, Lyta had already thought of someone. She arranged for a meeting with G'Kar.

Londo and Vir met over lunch. Vir presented Londo with the latest demands from the Court, including requests for information on the timetables of trade deals established with the other alliance worlds – something they had never cared about before. Even stranger, there was nothing else

– Londo's multiple appointments with other ambassadors had all been cancelled. Vir said it seemed as if the other worlds did not trust the Centauri. Londo laughed at this – no one trusted anyone, but that never interfered with normal business before. Confronted with a day all to himself, Londo realised he had nothing to do. Even Vir had other duties and Londo was left alone.

Lise and Garibaldi were getting reacquainted, but a shadow fell over their happiness when Lise found a half-empty bottle of liquor in his kitchen cabinet. Lise was furious – alcohol had ruined his life twice before. Garibaldi pleaded that his life was different now – he had so much more to live for, that the booze could not control him – that *he* could control *it*. Garibaldi tried to explain – he had been mind controlled by Bester, he had been nearly executed by the Mars resistance. He was tired of being controlled by others. His drinking was an act of rebellion, something he could control himself. Lise found this explanation to be ridiculous and demanded proof of Garibaldi's supposed control. While she was there – no booze.

Aboard the *Maria*, Lennier worked on a device. When Captain Montoya asked him what he was doing, Lennier explained that, thus far, he had only decoded three words from the Centauri messages: 'Do not reply'. Lennier had an insight – the signal might be going to a stationary base, since a reply would give away its position and render invulnerable. Such a base would need a faint tachyon beam to aid communication. Normally, such a beam would be undetectable, but at the exact moment the main message was transmitted, it could theoretically be locked onto and tracked. The device he was working on would enable that. Unfortunately, this would remain a theory – orders had just come through. The ship was being recalled on the direct orders of President Sheridan.

Delenn confronted him about this. He was angry that the ship was operating on the borders of Centauri space without his knowledge. Delenn claimed she had the authority to do this as head of the Rangers. Sheridan continued his angry tirade, but was stopped short by three curt words from Delenn: 'You are right'. She agreed it was inappropriate for her to assign Lennier... and it was also inappropriate for him *not* to assign Lennier. This was not something Sheridan



was about to agree to, but Delenn went on: Lennier had the experience with the Centauri the others lacked. He would catch things the others would miss. Sheridan tried to argue against this, but failed. Delenn went on – the only reason Sheridan had not assigned Lennier was because he was her friend. Sheridan was forced to admit this was true – Delenn had lost too many of those close to her in the past year. Before he could go much further, a call came in from the *Maria*. Lennier had taken a fighter and gone off his own.

Deep in hyperspace, Lennier followed the tachyon signal. The destination was further than his ship's air supply would last under normal circumstances, so he placed himself into a meditative state and placed the ship on autopilot, instructed to keep tracking the signal. The ship would awaken him if anything attempted to intercept it.

Lyta entered G'Kar's quarters, where he greeted her warmly. The last time they had spoken together was six years ago and at that time he had offered to compensate her for the offer of her genetic material, to help the Narn produce telepaths of their own. The process would be either via cloning or direct mating. G'Kar reminisced over missed opportunities and asked what he could do for Lyta now.

She would accept his proposition, if he was still interested. He was – the Narn still lacked telepaths, placing them at a disadvantage, Lyta told him that the Narn would get not just her DNA, but that of as many telepaths as they needed... for a price. The price would be, firstly, money – lots of it, deposited to private accounts, secondly, at least five deep range ships, and thirdly, that this be done in utter secrecy. G'Kar hesitated on that last point – as Alliance members, the Narn had obligations. However, if the matter were considered an *internal* affair, as Lyta suggested, it could escape scrutiny without causing G'Kar to behave contrary to his ethics. She left him to ponder her offer.

At the Fresh Air, Garibaldi and Lise settled in for dinner. Garibaldi had not been here since the night of Santiago's assassination, years ago. He mused that nearly all those he had been with on that night had left – some were dead, some were elsewhere, some had simply disappeared. Lise talked about the problems she

had been having running Edgars Industries on Mars and asked how Sheridan had reacted to the news that Garibaldi would be returning there with her. Garibaldi talked about the soy-steaks. He had not told Sheridan yet. Before he could be further grilled, a waiter approached to take their drink orders. He was curiously insistent that Garibaldi order alcohol, to the point where Garibaldi had to shout at him in order to get him to accept the order of coffee. Lise's plan of helping him relax was not working – he was frayed to breaking point. He tried to steer the conversation to more pleasant topics when the waiter brought their drinks. Garibaldi claimed the coffee was bad and excused himself, taking the opportunity to pour some alcohol into the drink, as the waiter looked on and snickered.

Meanwhile, Captain Montoya called President Sheridan. Even with three other White Stars aiding them, they had not found Lennier's ship. Even more, Minbari fighters were not intended for long-range travel. The emergency air supply would last 36 hours, but it was now almost 48 hours. Even with meditation, Lennier was reaching the end of the line.

A ship had been detected following the tachyon beacon. Lennier, almost unconscious, ordered his fighter to enter stealth mode and to move off-beacon to allow the new ship to pass, then to move up alongside the passing vessel and attach to its hull. This allowed it to drain oxygen from the Centauri ship, which was opening a jump point. Once it exited hyperspace, it docked by a huge Centauri base, one of a massive fleet of warships.

Sheridan lay awake in bed and tried to apologise to Delenn, who was also having a sleepless night. He tried to tell her



that sending Lennier was the right and logical choice. Delenn insisted that Lennier was not dead, despite it being three days since there had been any contact.

Vir awoke Londo to alert him to an urgent message from Centauri Prime. Minister Vitelli informed him that their sources on the Drazi homeworld and elsewhere, had let it be known that Sheridan was going to try to implicate the Centauri in the attacks, even to the point of fabricating evidence. Londo knew Sheridan would never do such a thing, but Vitelli pointed out that the Narn had access to Centauri vessels and could easily stage such attacks. Londo must do everything to prevent the blame being placed on the Centauri.

Lyta responded to G'Kar's summons. He had convinced his government to agree to her terms – there was only one stipulation. Would Lyta be willing to have her people spy on the other ambassadors and report on what they found? Angrily, she declined. She would not do that. As she left, G'Kar stopped her. There was no such condition – he was testing her to see how far she would go. If she had agreed to those terms then there would be no deal, because he could not trust her. She had given the right answer. The deal was set.

Still pinned to the bottom of a Centauri cruiser, Lennier recorded a vicious attack on a Brakiri shipping fleet, hearing the pleas of those attacked for mercy. In seconds, nothing remained but flaming rubble. As the Centauri ships prepared to jump away, Lennier detached, hiding among the other debris. Once the Centauri craft had left, Lennier sent a distress signal.

Montoya had called Sheridan to tell him the news. They had found Lennier's fighter... he was alive and had found the proof they needed.

The *Maria* returned to Babylon 5 and discharged Lennier, who handed the recordings to Sheridan. Sheridan held the tiny data crystal in his hand, as if wondering how something so small could hold a portent so grave. They had worked months to get this, but he was not pleased with success. He then tasked Garibaldi with getting Franklin and G'Kar to meet with them in Sheridan's quarters and after that, he would need Garibaldi as never before.

Vir found Londo in the Zocalo and insisted on talking to him immediately. A council meeting had been called, meaning, they had found out something. Londo held out hope that Minister Vitelli was wrong, that there would be no attempt to blame the Centauri. This hope was dashed when Vir noted everyone *but* Londo had been asked to the meeting. Londo watched a whispered conversation

between Franklin and Garibaldi and realised things were going very badly indeed.

In his quarters, Garibaldi told Lise to leave immediately, to get back to Mars – or to anywhere – as soon as possible. By this time tomorrow, he told her, the Alliance and the Centauri would be at war.

Lise Hamilton-Edgars

4th Level Human Worker (White Collar)

Hit Points: 9

Initiative: +0 (+0 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 11 (+1 Reflex)

Attacks: +2 melee or +2 ranged

Special Qualities: White Collar

Saves: Fort +4, Reflex +1, Will +3

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 16

Skills: Appraise +9, Bluff +10, Computer Use +9, Drive +7, Gather Information +7, Knowledge (Mars) +9, Knowledge (Business World) +9, Profession (Executive) +9, Sense Motive +5, Spot +9, Technical (Electronics) +9

Feats: Contact, Independently Wealthy, Skill Focus (Profession (Executive))

Lise Hamilton-Edgars (and eventually, Lise Hamilton-Edgars-Garibaldi) is a smart, charming, dedicated woman who is nonetheless not exactly the galaxy-saving type. Fortune both good and bad gave her control over one of the most powerful businesses on Mars and while she is competent, she is not superhuman. She will often need help in the darker, seedier, or just more technical aspects of running Edgars Industries and in the months between her inheriting the business and Mr Garibaldi marrying her, she may turn to the likes of the characters for help (any Player who thinks of taking advantage of her should remember her fiancée's temper, skills and desire to kill *someone*, since he cannot get to Bester).

Telepath DNA

It would seem that acquiring telepath DNA is trivial – have a drink with a teep, pocket the glass and extract the DNA from the biological residue. The extreme efforts to which G'Kar will go to get the genetic material his people needs seems pointless. However, the actual gene sequences for telepathic abilities are very complex and are, in fact, multicellular. While normal genes replicate fully, the genes for telepathy are actually only partially replicated in each cell and it takes a fairly large sample of cells to get a complete set. Furthermore, there is a constant shift in which genes in the sequence express themselves at any given time, necessitating many samples over a protracted period.

Lastly, trying to splice human and Narn DNA requires more than just a few cells; it requires humans willing to submit to extended scans, experiments and procedures and then possibly serve as wombs for the production of human-Narn hybrids.

Successfully extracting a full set of the gene sequences which are responsible for telepathy requires an advanced MedLab and a Technical (Forensics) check (DC 30), along with 1d4 days. At least 50 samples will be needed before the Narn have enough data to begin replicating the structures. The entire process of restoring the mindwalkers will take decades, even under optimal conditions.

Signal Trace

Lennier's device for locking on to the carrier wave is not one that is easily replicated. Because of the rapidly changing frequencies, each such device is viable only for a 1d4 days. Assembling a frequency tracker requires 2d6 hours, access to a range of electronic components and a Technical (Electronics) check (DC 25).

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Lyta would undoubtedly want all-telepath crews on the deep-range ships, but this might not be viable. The renegades and rogues she would be working with might not possess among them all the skills necessary to pilot such vessels and that means she would need to seek out teep-friendly mundanes to fill vital roles. Such individuals would face a very challenging job – in effect, they would be deaf and dumb with regards to their crewmates, who will probably resent having to constantly vocalise.

The search for a telepath homeworld is easily a campaign in itself. An all- or mostly- telepath crew offers a lot of opportunities for telepath characters to distinguish themselves by what they are *other* than telepaths – to have a 'niche' in the game other than mind-reader. It also allows for a game that focuses primarily on exploration and first contact, but combined with a looming threat – wherever the teeps go, they will be pursued, overtly or covertly, by the Psi Cops. This adds an edge of danger and continuity to an otherwise episodic style of play.

Lyta knows better than to put all her eggs in one basket. She will continue to look for others to support her, as well as ways to optimise her investment. She might fund small survey missions that will find likely candidates for the deep-range ships to check out in detail. She may bribe – or just scan – IPX employees to find out what they are looking at. Hacking into IPX databases is also a possibility. She will

also serve as a go-between for those looking to hire human telepaths 'on the QT', for all sorts of jobs, provided they are not dangerous or grossly unethical – in short, the sort of work registered teeps normally do, only without the risk of Psi Corps finding out about it.

Garibaldi may take to drinking well out of sight of his fellow officers, as well as purchasing his liquor from less obvious sources. Seedy bars in Downbelow might find him as a visitor, either as a mere purchaser or as a patron. He can easily justify his presence as intelligence gathering and his alcoholism is not common knowledge – few would think twice about seeing him taking a drink or two. This can put him into the spheres of the characters (who would be well advised to do nothing to make him mad).

And All My Dreams, Torn Asunder (October 1st 2262)

Sheridan slept fitfully and awoke alone. Outside their bedroom, Delenn sat, staring silently at a candle. She did so until it had burned to a stump. The two communicated silently, dreading what they knew they would soon have to do.

Sheridan spoke before the Alliance council. He spoke of his regrets at having to be there, to do what he had to do. As he spoke, Londo and Vir attempted to join the meeting, only to be stopped by Zack and two security guards. Londo was furious. He had every right to be in the meeting, to rebut whatever lies the other members of the Advisory Board might be telling. Finally he left, seething in rage – and Vir was no better, though his rage was tinged with more obvious concern.

Delenn spoke. She spoke of the attacks – the cost in credits, which was huge, and the cost in lives, which was immeasurable. Sheridan continued, reminding the assembled ambassadors of his promise to them – that if they were patient and waited for proof, the Alliance would back whatever action they chose. Then Delenn dropped the bombshell. They had proof the Centauri were behind the attacks. As the diplomats erupted, Sheridan continued, speaking of how heavily that promise now weighed upon them – but it would be honoured, no matter what.

In Delenn's quarters, the candle flickered and went out.

It was Franklin who delivered the first testimony to the council, after he had given a copy of that testimony to Londo, who was waiting, under guard, in his quarters.

Franklin told the council that the energy weapons built by each world had subtle differences, due to local materials used in construction. These differences in frequency could be detected by studying the corpses pulled from the wreckage of the attacked ships – the eyes of the dead contained a message for the living. The spectrum used in the weapons was consistent with Centauri weapons.

Garibaldi was up next. Again, he delivered his proof personally to Londo before he spoke to the council. He spoke not of the bodies of beings, but of the corpses of ships, which showed the signs of Centauri weapons and tactics. He also presented the button he pulled from his attacker on the Drazi homeworld, a button that Londo himself had identified as belonging to the Centauri Palace Guards. Further, the ambush was the result of a leak that occurred after a normal Advisory Council planning session, and, since Londo had been kept out of the loop after that, there had been no further leaks. In addition, only one Centauri ship had been attacked in three months – an ageing transport, due to be retired and carrying no cargo.

G'Kar was the next to arrive at Londo's door, to be greeted with weary bitterness far different and far more chilling, than Londo's usual bluster. G'Kar explained he had not been a spy when he was on Centauri Prime, but was exactly what he claimed to be: Londo's protector and possibly conscience. He would not testify before the council. He did however remind Mollari of the events on Centauri Prime – that there were obvious preparations for war, that information on the location of warships was becoming secret, where once it had been available to those in Londo's position. Londo had to know something was going on. He was also here to tell Londo the council would see him now.

Arguing before the council, Londo put on a good show. He angrily dismissed the so-called 'evidence', shredding the files he had been handed and standing in a shower of self-made confetti as flung the pieces into the air. The evidence was a joke – crude and offensive, but still a joke. Circumstantial evidence, half-truths, assumptions – nothing solid. Weapons? The Centauri had supplied weapons to other worlds. Formally, Sheridan asked Londo if he refuted the charges and Londo claimed there was nothing to refute.

As he began to leave the room, Delenn called him back. There was still one more piece of evidence to show and she wanted him to see it at the same time the others did.

Lennier entered and presented his information, talking about the signals he intercepted and how he had tracked the signals. He showed the Centauri base he had found and noted the identification marks on the warships did not correspond to any known records. Further, Lennier was attached to one of the ships when it jumped and he showed the images he had taken when the ship returned – the slaughter of a group of Brakiri freighters. Londo watched in controlled shock and said he would have to speak to his government before replying. Sheridan said that, when he did, he should pass along the following message: The Centauri government was guilty of terrorism and would be isolated. All transports would be blocked. Any Centauri vessel entering or leaving would be stopped, boarded and turned back. This blockade would continue until the Centauri government acknowledged the attacks, apologised for them and provided reparations. Until then, it would stand alone.

In his quarters, Londo paced impatiently, waiting for a reply from homeworld, which was long overdue. Vir wondered if, perhaps, the delay might be because they knew the charges were true. Londo angrily dismissed the concept. The Centauri did not strike first, did not attack civilian targets, except during times of war – and there was no war. Finally, Minister Vitelli called in. The Regent had declared the evidence a fraud – and Vitelli concurred with that. There were, he said, only two explanations: Firstly, the material was a deliberate forgery – something Londo denied, since he knew Lennier would never be a party



to such a thing. That left option two – that it was all a ruse by the Narn. Vitelli spun a complex, but not entirely implausible, conspiracy to explain all that Lennier saw. Vir did not believe it; Londo did not *want* to believe it. Dutifully, he carried the Regent's response to the Alliance Council.

At the Council, Londo laid out the official position of the Republic: It denied all allegations. It was a victim of an elaborate hoax. It would identify those responsible for the hoax. Further, the Republic would not allow itself to be intimidated or threatened – and withdrew from the Alliance. Lastly, the Republic did not recognise the legality of the blockade. All Centauri transports would be accompanied by a warship and anyone who fired on a transport would be committing an act of war – and draw an appropriate response. Londo then left without further comment and intended to return to Centauri Prime. Sheridan cautioned him that if he left Babylon 5, he would not be allowed to return until the crisis had past – if at all. Londo accepted this and reminded the Council that any attack on Centauri shipping would be an act of war.

In the hall outside, Londo ordered Vir to book him on the first transport home. He needed to prove the Centauri were not responsible, but he could not do that here. He needed to go home. Vir however, had to stay behind. He would have to speak for the Centauri while Londo was gone.

Delenn entered G'Kar's quarters. He told her that when Londo left, he would be going with him. Because Londo was kept ignorant of the attacks, he would be in great danger when he returned home and since he was the best hope of restoring sanity to the Republic, he had to be protected. G'Kar had not yet broken the news to Londo. As he prepared to leave, he gave the latest chapters of the Book of G'Kar to Delenn. He knew he was taking a considerable risk by going to Centauri Prime and he wanted to make sure his work survived. He was especially concerned about setting right some of the earlier portions of the work, written when he was much younger and angrier. The two parted, almost in tears.

Sheridan, meanwhile, wanted Garibaldi but Zack had been unable to contact him. Finally, Zack resorted to going

to Garibaldi's quarters, where Michael was slowly rousing himself from his drunken slumber. He desperately hid the various bottles of liquor he had scattered around his quarters and let Zack in. Garibaldi was very defensive about his need for sleep and cranky about Sheridan's perennially 'important' meetings. Zack suspected something was up and tossed Garibaldi an orange, which he dropped... and then another, which he also dropped. Zack pinned it: Garibaldi was drunk. Garibaldi half-heartedly denied this, then turned on Zack, alternately condemning Zack's own past issues and trying to justify his own current behaviour. Zack could not take this. Garibaldi was an alcoholic and he could not justify or deflect the blame for his actions. Momentarily subdued, Garibaldi asked if Zack would turn him in. Zack was unsure and decided to give Garibaldi a little more time. The two went off to get some anti-alcoholic drugs before Garibaldi's meeting with Sheridan.

Meanwhile, in hyperspace, a massive Centauri war fleet gathered, while a lone White Star drifted nearby.

Garibaldi was meeting with Sheridan, who was explaining the situation. Every Centauri transport was accompanied by a warship, while every other race sat outside their own jumpgates, waiting for the Centauri to try and come through. It was all set to explode any minute. Sheridan, though, had a plan. The Centauri were egotistical, yes, but not stupid. If the Centauri exited hyperspace to find only Drazi or Brakiri stationed, they would be likely to open fire – but not if they faced, instead, a squadron of White Stars. That was where Michael came in. The Rangers were monitoring the Centauri and Garibaldi would co-ordinate that information, so that their movements could be tracked. As soon as the Centauri planned to enter Alliance



space, Garibaldi would contact Sheridan, and the White Stars would move to intercept, creating a buffer zone. It was ugly, but it was their only chance to avoid a war – thus, it was vital for Michael to relay the information from the Rangers at full speed. Otherwise, there would be no time to get the White Stars into position.

On Centauri Prime, G'Kar and Londo approached the palace, watching warship after warship fly off overhead. They were greeted inside by Minister Vitelli, who feigned pleasure at seeing Londo and demonstrated genuine revulsion at seeing G'Kar. He also told Londo that the Regent was 'occupied' and would be for some time.

White Star 43 called Garibaldi to report on Centauri movements, but received no reply, as Garibaldi was passed out in his office. Without any backup, the White Star decided to go in alone.

The Centauri emerged from the jump point to confront a Drazi blockade. Even as White Star 43 emerged to try to stop the battle, both sides opened fire. Space became alive with fire, fire which consumed Drazi, Centauri and White Star alike.

Delenn and Sheridan spent another sleepless night, when the door chimed. A grim Zack was there, who passed along tragic news to Sheridan: it had started.

Vir, meanwhile, was trying to contact Londo, but Minister Vitelli ran interference. Vir was on the verge of smashing the furniture in a Londo-esque rage when Dr Franklin entered. Vir had to be moved to new quarters. Centauri attacks had enraged the League worlds and anti-Centauri violence was spreading on the station. As the two tried to make it safely down the halls, three Brakiri confronted them, urging Franklin to leave before he too got hurt. Some quick thinking by Franklin got them through it, but it was close.

Sheridan was dressing down Garibaldi, demanding an explanation. Garibaldi claimed that some Centauri simply 'got past' them. As the Advisory Council – what was left of it – tried to establish who fired first, an angry mob of ambassadors entered the room, demanding to know where the White Star fleet was. Sheridan had promised to support their actions. Where was the fleet? The screaming was brought to an end by an impassioned, almost tearful, rage from Sheridan. He shouted that he would honour his promise and that he was damned for making it and they were damned for asking for it. The other races did not want peace or co-operation, they wanted war and they got one.

On Centauri Prime, Londo and G'Kar were both in bed, but neither slept. Minister Vitelli, accompanied by several guards, entered the room, first to tell Londo war had broken out and second, to place G'Kar under arrest as a spy. Londo refused to permit it. G'Kar was here as his guest. Where Londo went, G'Kar went and vice versa. Smugly, Londo assured G'Kar that even Vitelli would not dare imprison the Prime Minister.

In the cell they both shared soon after, Londo told a silent G'Kar to shut up.

Delenn sat, contemplating a candle. Sheridan joined her. The candle represented life, all life. Life was born in the heart of stars but, over time, life forgot its origins and fought over lines on maps, each light convinced it was brighter than all the others. The candle symbolised the heart of the star, the spark of common origin that united all living beings. The flame also represented the uniqueness of life; each flame was unique and, when it was extinguished, it was gone forever. That night, many flames would go out...

Conspiracy Theories

No matter what the truth, there will be those who do not believe it. Sometimes, they are quite justified in this – consider the fact that, for a time, Earth was effectively being controlled by elder beings from beyond the Rim, or that telepaths were the result of alien intervention or that major corporations were plotting to unleash a deadly plague upon the world. The Drakh are masters of dark plotting and their tendrils have already pushed the galaxy to the brink of war without anyone, not even those who have met their ships, suspecting their involvement.

However, it is likewise true that 'Just because the government is lying, does not mean everyone else is telling the truth'. For every real conspiracy, there are dozens or hundreds of false ones, constructed for a variety of reasons. Some people find comfort in the belief that someone, even an evil someone, is in charge. A galaxy where events happen because of the random whims of billions of sentient beings, with no guiding authority behind it all, is frightening. Others wish to deny moral or legal responsibility. There are still those who claim that the bombardment of Narn killed only a fraction as many as is being claimed and spin elaborate stories about 'energy dissipation' and the like to 'prove' the mass drivers could not wreak the havoc attributed to them, dismissing arguments to the contrary as 'Narn propaganda', feeding the 'maw of the Narn guilt-machine'. Some on Earth still claim that the Minbari fired first and it has all been covered up; others claim the Minbari 'surrender' at the Battle of the Line was a cover-up for a deal

where humans would be used by the Minbari for fiendish experiments (Delenn's transformation to a half-human is, of course, proof). Even when there is a grain of truth, such as the assassination of President Santiago, there will be those who expand on it – Clark was just a patsy for other, darker, groups, who are still in control. Indeed, Clark's so-called 'suicide' was clearly a fraud; careful analysis of trivids showed the ink on the 'Scorched Earth' document did not match the standard ink issued by EarthGov. Clark is either still alive and in custody or was killed before he could talk about who was *really* in charge.

On Centauri Prime, tales of secret wars against practically every other race are so self-evidently ludicrous that there *must* be some other explanation. The simplest one, of course, is that all the so-called 'evidence' is false. The motive is equally simple: jealousy of the great Centauri Republic. 'Proof' of this is found all throughout Centauri media – documents purporting to show the ships allegedly 'destroyed' never even existed, questions about how any fleet, even that of the Centauri, could strike without ever losing a single ship or being caught off-guard by Q-ships; mysterious 'discrepancies' in the tales of lives lost or cargo destroyed, etc.

Some go deeper, alleging that, yes, Centauri ships were involved – there was a plot to destroy the Republic from *within*. House Mollari is often named as the prime suspect, given Londo's well-known association with G'Kar, a man who had publicly sworn to destroy the Republic in the past. This often swirls with stories of Londo's rumoured participation in the assassination of Cartagia.

That the truth is not far from this – that there is a dark conspiracy to destroy the Republic and that Londo *is* a part of it – would likely surprise the rumour-spreaders no end.

It can be interesting, in play, to deal with the fact Centauri characters will simply not want to accept the truth. This refusal can lead them to the real truth – the Drakh involvement – or it can lead them ever deeper into paths of paranoia, missing the genuine enemy while searching for a horde of false ones.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Vengeance! Stalin once noted, with grim correctness, that 'A single death is a tragedy; a million deaths is a statistic.' To counter this, it is a good idea to personalise the lives lost in the Centauri raids. The Brakiri on the ships attacked have friends, lovers, relatives – and they might not all have

been Brakiri. Civilian transports often carry passengers from other races, so anyone may have lost a loved one in the attacks. If a group contains both Centauri and Brakiri characters, this can be used to generate tension and good roleplaying – will the characters try to work together to ferret out *why* the attacks are occurring, or will they be at each other's throats?

The Book of G'Kar, Version 1.1: It is unclear if these sections and corrections were ever added to the work and, given the fanatical nature of some of G'Kar's followers, it is unlikely that they would accept revision. Many would actually view changes to the canon as suspect, even if they came from G'Kar himself. Schisms could easily form among the movement.

Centauri are a well-travelled race and not overly despised, especially if they stay out of Narn territory. Given the attacks on Alliance shipping though, they are suddenly enemy number one. Player character Centauri can expect all manner of random and unprovoked attacks and Centauri Non-Player Characters might seek the characters out to ask for protection. This can be especially tense if the characters are located in a confined environment such as a passenger cruiser, where there is little room to hide from a lynch mob.

On Centauri Prime, confusion and disbelief is reigning. Commoner and Noble alike will be stunned and angered by these baseless accusations, and many will do something about it. Those who instinctively distrust the government will try to find proof that the Centaurum is covering up the attacks. The larger majority who distrust the aliens will try to find the 'real killers', the true source of the attacks on shipping. Characters may do either of these things themselves, or may be hired or asked to help. A covert mission to a Narn military base looking for the alleged Centauri ships, for example, or a break-in to the headquarters of the ministry of defence looking for the secret orders behind the attacks are both possible scenarios.

Battles are flaring all across space. Centauri officers might be involved, as would officers of other races. The ISA is momentarily not involved in the fighting directly, but pilots or captains of any other race, including humans, may be. Anything from small skirmishes to massive fleet actions can spring up, either as the focus of an adventure or as an additional distraction ('You need to leave Zinzar *now* if you want to meet your contact on Brakos, but there is this small matter of a firefight occurring near the jumpgate.').

Movements of Fire and Shadow (October 3rd 2262)

In orbit around Draxis, a minor Drazi colony world, Centauri and Drazi forces clashed. Superior Centauri technology more than made up for superior Drazi numbers. Homing bombs made short work of the defenders. As this and other battles raged across space, smaller, but no less brutal battles raged on the decks and corridors of Babylon 5. Centauri civilians were being beaten and murdered in unprecedented numbers, to the point where a quarantine on Centauri would be required. Unlike the Narn/Centauri war, virtually every race now had a grudge against the Republic.

Late at night, Sheridan visited Lochley in her quarters, in order to pass along the latest bad news from Mr Garibaldi. The Centauri were rumoured to have begun targeting enemy jumpgates, a violation of one of the most basic rules of warfare, a rule forged in the fires of self-interest: if jumpgates are destroyed, the hyperspace beacon network is undermined, harming all races – including the Centauri. Much as with the initial attacks on shipping, this made no sense. Such irrationality raised the possibility of other pointless attacks, such as an attack on Babylon 5 itself. Lochley was prepared for this, but she also believed that no matter how mad the Centauri might be, they had to realise that Babylon 5 was vital to the peace process. The Centauri would not attack B5 unless the White Stars were involved... which, Sheridan informed her, had just started. Honouring his promise to the member worlds, Sheridan had authorised the White Stars to fire on any Centauri warship engaged in combat with Alliance vessels.

Babylon 5 was no longer neutral ground.

Delenn sensed a burden weighing on Sheridan's mind, something he was hesitant to discuss with her. The Alliance was running low on White Stars. They had been using them against everything, for every mission and while they were exceptional craft, losses were inevitable. Newer, bigger, vessels were needed – something the Grey Council might hesitate to provide, due to the expense. Sheridan however,

had a different plan – a joint Earth/Minbari development project, so the cost would not be borne only by one world. Earth was willing... if the Minbari were willing. The task of getting Minbari co-operation fell to Delenn. Delenn was happy to do this, so she did not understand what was troubling her husband. It was the fact she would have to go in person and the expanding Centauri war made the route dangerous. This did not dissuade her and she made plans to leave.

Vir Cotto, in the spartan quarters provided for his protection, had asked to meet with Franklin and Lyta, in order to ask a favour. There had been much fighting in Drazi space and while the Centauri had honoured the custom of returning the bodies of the Drazi slain in battle to their own people, the Drazi had not responded in kind – despite being signatories to the Alliance Declaration of Principles which mandated this behaviour. Lyta was sympathetic, but did not see what she and Franklin were supposed to do. Vir explained: Franklin, as chief medical officer of the Alliance, could apply pressure and Lyta could find out what they were hiding. Furthermore, Franklin could tell if any dead Centauri died in space or died later, after being tortured by the Drazi. A Vree transport was waiting to take them to Zhabar, the Drazi homeworld. Franklin agreed, but Lyta held back. She wanted money, a lot of it – half a million credits or no deal. Vir sputtered, but finally said he would look into it, and Lyta gave him a link to an account used to help fund telepaths escaping from the Corps. After she left, Franklin suggested that Vir call Londo, but was informed that Londo was 'otherwise engaged'.

Back on Centauri Prime, Londo was indeed engaged – in bickering with his cellmate, G'Kar, who felt that with the



Centaurs at war, Londo belonged outside. Londo differed. He knew the war came either directly from the Regent or from those acting on his behalf. To stop the war, Londo needed to go against the Regent without being executed and to do *that* he needed supporters – and his presence in G'Kar's cell, imprisoned without charges, would help him gain some. Once the Centaurum realised the Regent was acting irresponsibly, they might be able to act against him. As he prepared to sleep while awaiting the mass uprising in his name, the cell was filled with a flare of light, and both Londo and G'Kar were knocked instantly unconscious, as three robed figures entered the room. They dragged Londo's unconscious body out, then put it on a stretcher and took it deep within the palace. There, they scanned him and probed him, and allowed him to regain consciousness long enough to see a Drakh pronouncing him 'sufficient'. Then consciousness was taken from him once again, and he awoke in his cell, where G'Kar told him that no angry mob had yet come to storm the palace on his behalf. Neither had any explicit memory of the night's events, but Londo was filled with a sudden urge to leave the cell – though he had to do so without compromising his honour. G'Kar had a solution, which involved a sudden biological expulsion, the stench of which was sufficient to grant Londo an acceptably face-saving reason to leave.

On Babylon 5, a war council was in session, with human, Narn, Brakiri and Drazi generals represented. All praised the aid of the White Stars and said that they had helped drive back several Centauri attacks. However, each was solely focused on protecting their own territories. Lochley asked why they had not consolidated, with the stronger races shoring up the fleets of the weaker. This was met with contempt – no race would take orders from another. Sheridan cut short that debate – what he wanted was an understanding of Centauri strategy. This brought confused, and slightly embarrassed, looks from the assembled generals. Garibaldi saw a two-pronged approach: one part of the fleet was focused on defending Centauri bases, while the other part conducted attacks – but there were no exchanges between the two fleets. The Narn noted this was not typical for the Centauri. Sheridan went on – these were tactics, but what was the Centauri *strategy*? Wars are not fought for the sake of fighting wars; there had to be some goal the Centauri wished to achieve. Lochley was called away, while General Na'Tok of the Narn continued; he did not care about the Centauri strategy, but he did care that the Alliance was fighting a reactive, not proactive, war. The Alliance had the resources to strike at Centauri holdings – why did they not do it? Sheridan tried to explain that containment was key, but the Drazi General allied himself with the Narn – they could win more quickly by carrying the war to the Centauri. Sheridan opposed this – attacks on the homeworld would be attacks on civilian targets. Even

though the Centauri had done this themselves, the Alliance was supposed to be above such things. The three generals did not object, but exchanged glances among themselves, as if acknowledging an earlier decision.

In C&C, Corwin showed Lochley the latest images from the long-range hyperspace probes – a Centauri cruiser moving towards Babylon 5. However, there were no support ships accompanying the cruiser, which was odd, and its weapon systems were powered down. As Lochley and Corwin reviewed this, more data came in – odd readings from the jump engines and, even more strangely, no life readings – the cruiser was on autocontrol. Lochley realised what was going on, and ordered Alpha Squadron, stationed in hyperspace, to break and attack. The Centauri ship was planning to blow the jump gate. Lochley ordered the gate struts opened as wide as possible to minimise the damage, even as Alpha Squadron fired on the cruiser. The ship was destroyed just as it exited the jump point; damage to the gate was fortunately minimal.

Na'Tok and the Drazi general watched the maintenance pods swarm to repair the gate. The Drazi sneered at the humans' sloppiness in allowing the Centauri to perform such a strike. The humans, he said, did not have the stomach for his kind of war. Only a direct assault on the Centauri homeworld could end it. Na'Tok agreed. The Narn forces would join with the Drazi.

Elsewhere in hyperspace, en route to Minbar, Delenn received a report from Sheridan on the recent events. Casualties were light, but the gate was shut down for two or three days. Delenn was still two days away from Minbar, but the Grey Council had been alerted to her arrival.

On the Drazi homeworld, Lyta and Franklin made their way through the narrow, crowded streets, getting ever more lost as Franklin obeyed a fundamental evolutionary directive; 'never ask for directions'. They slowly made their way to their goal, unaware they were being watched.

On Centauri Prime, Londo addressed a group of young nobles and Minister Cholini. Londo spoke glowingly of his past support for the Regent, but saw that now it was an unwise choice. Cholini disagreed. As Minister of Defence, he knew that the Centauri fleet had been used only for defence; the fleet commanders, under direct orders from the Regent, had never attacked. Londo protested he had seen Centauri ships attacking other Alliance vessels, but Cholini dismissed these claims. All military under his command was used for defence and that was that. The Ministry of Defence would not support any move against the Regent. Cholini and the others left.

Defence around Babylon 5 had increased; Vree, Brakiri, and Drazi ships circled the massive space station. Inside, Sheridan tried to make sense of various reports, but his futile effort was interrupted by Mr Garibaldi, who reported that nearly a third of the Narn and Drazi fleets had split off and were probably heading to Centauri Prime. Only Sheridan could head off a bloodbath. In moments, the Alliance President and dozens of White Stars raced to intercept the rogue fleets.

Franklin and Lyta had made it to their hotel on Zhabar. A Drazi doctor, Doctor Vharda, met with them to report that there were no Centauri bodies on the Drazi world. He explained that there were no bodies recovered – all were too mangled to salvage. As he spoke, Lyta scanned him and concluded he was lying. Even as Vharda denied it, two Drazi descended from an upper balcony and opened fire. Franklin shot one; Lyta telepathically commanded the other to kill himself, while Franklin watched in amazement and horror. Vharda tried to flee but Franklin grabbed him while Lyta pulled something from his mind. She demanded the Drazi take her to the place she had seen in his mind.

Two jumps from Minbar, Delenn's White Star encountered four Centauri warships. Evasion failed and a fusillade of bolts crippled the White Star before it could jump to normal space, sending it spinning out of control in hyperspace.

Vharda, a PPG stuck in his back, reluctantly led Franklin and Lyta to the secret he was willing to kill to hide. An unremarkable door in a dingy section of the Drazi city opened to a vast chamber containing rows and rows of tables, each of which held a large black ovoid. There were no bodies on the Centauri ships. Lyta probed one of the ovoids in fear and familiarity and managed to grab it just as the other Drazi in the room opened fire, sending them fleeing.

When Londo returned to his quarters, he was surprised to find the Regent waiting for him. Almost distractedly, the Regent reminded Londo that he had said they would speak again, before the end. Londo tried to turn the conversation to the ongoing war. The Regent admitted to giving the orders for war 'after a fashion'. Now it was to be Londo's time – the Regent's was almost over, a fate he was awaiting



with gladness. He was happy he would not live to see what followed.

In hyperspace, Sheridan received an urgent message from Franklin and Lyta, still hiding on Zhabar. Franklin told him all that they had found. This explained everything, why the Centauri viewed themselves as victims of an unprovoked attack. With only handful of close allies and a large supply of the Shadow technology used to control the ships, the Regent could run an offensive war completely without the military's knowledge. It was also possible that even the Regent did not know that a third party was using the devices to turn everyone against the Centauri. The Drazi were not going to talk because they wanted this technology for themselves.

Suddenly, the purpose and plan of the war became clear. There was no strategy or goal; the sole reason for the war was to provoke an attack on the Centauri. Sheridan ordered Franklin to contact Garibaldi and get him to break through the jamming which was cutting off communication with the combined Narn and Drazi fleets.

Armed with this information, Sheridan raced to avert a war.

In hyperspace, Delenn's White Star drifted. Electrical fires flickered on the bridge, while a badly injured Lennier struggled to reach a stricken Delenn. The jump engines were offline and most of the crew were dead. The rest were trapped behind walls of debris. For the moment, navigational thrusters would keep them on beacon, but they would soon fail and the ship would begin to drift.

On Centauri Prime, G'Kar took advantage of his quiet time alone to work on his book, while the Regent watched the night sky with regret. He knew it would be his last night, though Londo denied this, saying the Regent had years left – and that there was still time to make peace. The Regent said there would be peace... but it would not last. 'They' had told him this and had also told him that he would be dead by morning and that tomorrow Londo would be Emperor. Londo tried to find out who 'they' were, but the Regent pushed that aside. There was one more thing, he said, one more thing 'they' had told him to do and he had done it. He had ordered all of the defensive ships away from Centauri Prime and deactivated the planetary defence network. The homeworld of the Republic was defenceless. As Londo backed away in horror, the Regent decided to stay and watch the sky. Londo raced outside in terror to see hundreds of jump points forming in the sky above.

The skies of Centauri Prime began to burn...

The Shadows of the Shadows

The Vorlons left behind only a single obvious legacy – telepaths, created on a hundred or more worlds and this single remnant of their power has drastically reshaped the galaxy. The Shadows, as befits the masters of chaos, have left behind many, many legacies – races such as the Drakh, the technology that powers the Technomages and devices such as the ship controllers. These remnants will impact the galaxy for centuries. Hunting them down and destroying them can easily be the focus of a campaign, with the Players working for the ISA, the Rangers or even a private group (such as a religious order or a charitable foundation) dedicated to the cause of wiping out all signs of the Shadow's influence. It is also possible to hunt such things down in order to use them. This can be motivated by a desire to turn evil tools to good ends or simply a desire for power as an end in itself. It should be noted that the former can slide into the latter both quickly and imperceptibly – corruption is the way of the Shadows and those with the noblest of ideals are often the easiest to lure to darkness.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

The Drazi captured a lot of pods from the Centauri and some of them will inevitably make their way onto the black market. Characters could be sent to acquire them or to keep other forces from doing so. The cost of a control pod will be at least 100,000 credits and possibly more, depending on how rare the Games Master wishes to make them.

The ship Sheridan and Delenn are discussing will eventually be the Excalibur class Destroyer, one of which was given to Captain Gideon to use while hunting for a cure for the Drakh plague. The initial development of this ship was cloaked in secrecy, as much of the technology had never before been given to non-Minbari. However, with hundreds of people involved in procurement and construction, no secret is ever truly secure. There are many who would pay well for even a hint of the technologies involved – a datacrystal with blueprints, samples of hull plating, images of the work in progress and so on.

If travel from Epsilon to Minbar was dangerous, it means that Centauri ships – at least those under Drakh control – were pretty much everywhere in hyperspace. Players travelling anywhere in the Known Galaxy might well encounter a squadron of Centauri warships controlled by the Drakh. These vessels will not honour any offer to surrender or any attempt at negotiation, but will attack instantly and without mercy.

Centauri in the military will be actively involved in the 'defensive' portion of the war and continue to see themselves as victims. The orders to move away from Centauri Prime are likely to cause confusion, concern and even thoughts of mutiny.

As of this point, Drazi government agents have assaulted the head of Intelligence for the ISA and the head of Xenobiology for the ISA. Someone is going to pay for this. It is certain a scapegoat or two will be found, and said scapegoats will probably flee. Players may be sent after them to bring them in, or the scapegoats may contact the characters to help them find proof of the higher-ups involved in the attacks.

The Fall of Centauri Prime (October 10th 2262)

Centauri Prime burned, as the fury of the Narn and Drazi were unleashed upon it. Even in the depths of his cell, G'Kar could see flickerings of the power being unleashed outside, at least until his cell began to collapse. Londo rescued him and led him to his quarters before going to find a doctor.

Garibaldi filled Sheridan in on the situation. The fleets had reached Centauri Prime, which was defenceless and furthermore there had been no word from Delenn for 12 hours. There was fear she had run into a Centauri fleet.



Aboard the crippled White Star, Lennier tried to get some systems back on line, with little success.

Amidst the rubble of the palace, Londo found the Regent, who continued to babble about what 'they' were saying. Forgetting propriety in the face of madness, Londo grabbed the Regent roughly and demanded to know who 'they' were. The Regent showed him, as a Drakh revealed itself. Londo let the Regent go and turned to face the intruder, even as the Regent said it was now Londo's time...

Londo recognised the Drakh as a servant of the Shadows. The Regent, seeming to speak for the Drakh, explained – they had served the Shadows, believed in them, loved them... and then were abandoned by them. The Drakh himself then spoke, in a rasping, tired voice. They were shadows of shadows, without purpose or home, wanderers... until they remembered Centauri Prime and Londo, a place and a person in which their masters had seen great potential. The Shadows had come in numbers to Centauri Prime, along with their ships and associate races, and were destroyed by Londo when he blew up the island of Selini. Londo remembered how Morden had sworn vengeance would be taken against Centauri Prime and realised the Drakh were the instrument of that vengeance. The plan came together. The Drakh, who wished to be hidden, had used the other races of the Alliance to destroy Centauri Prime for them. Londo said that their quarrel was with him, not with innocents and that they should take their vengeance on him alone. The Drakh, however, did not want Londo's life...they wanted a home. The Centauri, beaten and resentful, would need to rebuild and would need the help and guidance of the Drakh. Londo insisted

he would not allow it, but the Regent said that he *would*, just as he had. Fusion bombs had been planted throughout Centauri Prime and if the Drakh were not heeded...

Beaten, Londo asked what the Drakh wanted from him. The answer was chilling: What the Drakh wanted from Londo... was Londo.

In space, above Centauri Prime, the White Stars arrived to try to end the bombardment. Sheridan ordered the fleets to cease-fire. A glib Na'Tok said he would be happy to comply, in exchange for Sheridan's support. Sheridan had, after

all, promised to back *any* action the Alliance worlds chose to undertake. Sheridan insisted he had never sanctioned such an attack and would not take part in it. This posed a problem, Na'Tok continued. The normal Centauri defence ships would soon return and would not care what was and was not authorised... they would want revenge. Either the White Stars fought alongside the other ships or they would be destroyed by the returning Centauri.

On the planet, the Regent echoed these sentiments. Soon, Sheridan's fleet would be drawn in, and more Centauri would die. Londo demanded the Regent issue the order to surrender. The Regent refused to do so – he was to be Londo's alibi. Londo was to say the Regent was mad and ordered the attacks without anyone else's knowledge. Then, Londo could give the surrender order when he was Emperor, which would be very soon. The Regent would not mind, because he knew Londo had no choice. As he said this, he turned toward the Drakh, who nodded slightly. The Regent told Londo to look at him closely. On the Regent's shoulder, a small grey thing, like a six-armed octopus with a single crimson eye, appeared. It was the Regent's Keeper, showing itself. The Regent explained the Keeper could control him, but only did so when its interests were at stake; at other times, he was free. Further, he could live only while the Keeper was attached. As he bid farewell to Londo, the Keeper detached itself. The Regent collapsed and died, while the Drakh looked on.

Aboard his White Star, Sheridan pondered the news that the returning Centauri fleet would be in range within 20 minutes. He ordered his ships not to engage, then continued attempts to raise Centauri Prime. He also ordered any

White Stars near Delenn's last reported position to begin searching for her.

Aboard that ship, Delenn asked Lennier how much life support remained, a question Lennier tried to avoid answering. He felt it was better not to know and in any event, the navigational thrusters would soon be out of fuel, setting them eternally adrift in hyperspace.

Londo returned to the ruins of his quarters, where G'Kar thanked him for saving his life. Londo considered it merely the fulfilment of a promise. He had promised to get G'Kar out of the cell and so he had. He also said that G'Kar could no longer be his bodyguard. Though it was not yet official, Londo was now effectively Emperor and it would not be appropriate for G'Kar to continue in his role. Londo had come to say goodbye – after this night, he felt he may never see G'Kar again. Further, he told G'Kar that in time to come, he would hear many strange things about Londo's behaviour. G'Kar said he understood... but Londo said that, perhaps, he did not – and he should pray he never did. This was the closest he could come to warning G'Kar of what was transpiring. Londo continued to muse. Years before, he said, he had no power and infinite choices but today, he had infinite power and no choices. As he left, G'Kar forced himself to stand and told Londo that he could never forgive the Centauri for what they had done to his world and that his people could never forgive Londo's people – but he, G'Kar, could forgive Londo – and did.

Londo left, and met with the Drakh. Displaying a fearlessness he probably did not truly feel, Londo watched as the Drakh removed a Keeper from within his skin.

Londo kept his face impassive as the thing crawled up his body and insinuated itself into his nervous system.

In orbit, Sheridan paced, as there was still no reply from Delenn's craft. With only five minutes to go until the Centauri ships reached firing range, Sheridan refused to leave position and join the search himself. Then, an encrypted signal from Centauri Prime to the approaching fleet was received. The message could not be decrypted, but there was anger and argument. Then the fleet held position, ceasing its advance, as a second signal came from the homeworld of the Republic – this one, a message for President Sheridan.

Londo's image appeared on the White Star's bridge. Londo accepted that the assault was not sanctioned by Sheridan, because he, Londo, was in a similar position. The attacks on Alliance shipping, he explained, were ordered by the Regent and not authorised by the Centaurum. The Regent was now dead and Londo would begin the recall of the ships. The war was over.

Sheridan wanted to speak with Londo in person. He needed a favour – for Delenn. Londo agreed to provide him safe passage. As soon as Londo ended the transmission, he went to the Drakh and asked what had happened to Delenn. Although the Drakh was silent, Londo knew what had occurred and he begged the Drakh not to do it, claiming nothing could be gained by killing her. The Drakh did not respond.

Sheridan and Londo walked through the palace while workers struggled to clean up the rubble. Sheridan explained the situation – Delenn's position, the likelihood

it was Centauri ships that had attacked and so on. He needed to know the exact location of the attack. Londo said it would be difficult and that if he did this he may someday ask for a favour from Sheridan – who was somewhat taken aback. Delenn was, after all, Londo's friend. Londo almost exploded. Friend? Sheridan's people had ravaged Londo's world. From now on, the Centauri would have nothing to do with the Alliance and would raise themselves up without any help. Should Londo save Delenn, it would be charity, nothing more. Bitterly, Sheridan said he understood



– and he then reminded Londo that the Republic would be held accountable for reparations, reparations that *might* be mitigated *slightly*. Sheridan explained about the pods, but Londo dismissed this as old news. The Regent had bought them on the black market. Londo then ended the conversation with a thinly veiled threat.

On the crippled White Star, the navigation thrusters finally died. The ship would now begin to drift. Delenn faced this with quiet, but not emotionless, stoicism. Perhaps they would find something in the uncharted depths, an ancient jumpgate or the like. Lennier said there was one small chance – they could activate weapons systems, in the hopes that their discharge would attract any searching vessels. However, this would also risk attracting hostile Centauri warships, as well as pushing the White Star further off-beacon. Delenn pondered this, then decided to do it. The weapons fired but a handful of times, then a proximity alert sounded. It was a fleet of Centauri warships.

Delenn and Lennier watched death approach. A beep, increasing in frequency, tracked the Centauri weapons – when it reached a steady tone, the ships could open a fire. There was a coded signal, most likely a confirmation message sent to the Centauri Prime. Delenn calmed herself to face death. Lennier confessed his love for her, a love she already knew about.

Death did not come. The ship was grappled by tractor beams. When she realised they were not going to die, Delenn turned to Lennier and tried to give him an honourable way out of his recent confession of love. He took it, though it hurt him greatly to do so.

Dawn broke through the fire and smoke of the prior night's devastation, as a harried Vir worked his way through the palace looking for the Prime Minister. Vir found him in his quarters, and was greeted with rage at entering without knocking, a behaviour which had never bothered Londo before. Vir was actually surprised to find Londo there – he had expected him to be in the royal suite. This was not going to occur until after the inauguration and that was an event Londo was in no mood to rush. He did not wish to live in the royal suite and look out over the damage, look out at the uncounted dead and wounded.

Vir and Londo discussed the terms of surrender, terms that would leave the Republic almost bankrupt. Vir said the people would be angry, resentful, full of rage at the Alliance and at Londo. Londo said he would talk to the people, to make them understand.

Sheridan, Delenn and G'Kar walked together in the Palace, as Delenn expressed hope this might be a chance to get

the new administration off to a good start. This hope was shattered as Londo's voice, amplified to reach the entire city and seeming to come from a gargantuan hologram which stood astride the ruins like a god, spoke words of nationalism and pride. A greater war was about to begin he said, a war to rebuild the Centauri Republic. He blamed Sheridan and the Alliance for the damage done, that the reparations were designed to break the Centauri, to cripple them. No matter – the burden would be borne and the Centauri would stand alone and rebuild alone. As Londo continued his speech, the Drakh looked on in approval. Londo went on to explain that, as an act of symbolism, he would walk to his inauguration alone, as the temple bells across the planet sounded all day and all night, a chime for each Centauri slain.

The three members of the Alliance council turned to Vir in surprise – was not Londo supposed to calm people down, not whip them into a fury? Vir tried to make excuses for Londo, but then, Londo arrived. He did not need to give reasons for his actions, he said, and it would be wise for Sheridan, Delenn and G'Kar to leave now, before the inauguration. Vir was to go with them – Londo's first act as Emperor was to appoint Vir as ambassador to Babylon 5. He paid Vir the somewhat backhanded compliment of saying he was sure Vir would do just as good a job as he did.

The bells began to sound, as Londo thought over his past, thought of all the events which had brought him here, to this place, at this time. Across the rubble-strewn streets of the capital city, he walked, alone, to his inauguration.

Later, on Babylon 5, the Command Staff examined the pod Lyta had recovered. There was no way to trace its origin. This fact scared Franklin. He pointed out that the nuclear device used by terrorists to destroy San Diego could be traced to the break-up of the Soviet Union. Likewise, the departure of the Shadows and the Vorlons left behind much dangerous technology, which could end up in all sorts of hands. Lyta noted that the telepaths were also 'abandoned weapons'. The Vorlon's own homeworld was still well protected – no one could penetrate the defences. Lyta suddenly said that the Vorlon homeworld was off limits until humans had earned the right to go there – a million years in the future. She said she had no idea where that message came from; she just knew it.

On Centauri Prime, in a darkened and empty room lit only by the occasional flicker from the still-burning city outside, Emperor Mollari II sat upon this throne.

The Republic in Ruins

The damage to Centauri Prime is dramatic, but it should be remembered that it is one world of many. Unlike the Narn, who had only a century to establish an off-world infrastructure, the Centauri have been space-faring for millennia. In order to avoid the risk of being discovered or stopped, the combined Narn/Drazi fleet dove past all colony and outpost worlds to strike directly at the heart of the Republic.

For most of the worlds in the Republic, life will go on as before, except for considerable belt-tightening. The folk of Batain or Jux or Bentat suffered no loss of life in the war, no cities in flames. However, they will experience the aftermath in the form of shortages, high prices, economic dislocation and so on. The reparations imposed on the Centauri are crippling, as they took into account the amount of infrastructure left undamaged. Paying off the demands of the other races will keep Homeworld from recovering quickly; the dramatic reduction or elimination of trade with the rest of the galaxy will make expanding the economy to cover the debts impossible. Many worlds in the Republic have been exploited for centuries and have little left to give. The vacation worlds of Bentat and Tumar will be forced into industrial development. The arrogant nobles of Tolonius will be given little choice about meeting much higher production quotas. Commoners will be lucky to get spoo once a week and even Nobles may have to suffer the indignities of domestic brevari. Compared to the fate of those left on Nar'Shal after the Centauri attacks, it is honestly not that bad, but every day of living will be a reminder to the proud Centauri of how they have been humbled.

On Centauri Prime itself, the destruction is physical as well as financial. It will be several years before most of the damage is repaired and traces of it will remain for decades. Characters who have spent time on Centauri Prime, as visitors or natives, will see many of their old haunts in ruins, from portions of the palace to their favourite stores in the Mercantum to the bar where they habitually met to plot their next move. Any local Non-Player Characters, friend or foe, might have been killed. Personalising war is vital to making it seem a tragedy, not an exciting show.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Londo's 'Blame the Regent' strategy will mollify some, but not all (see the earlier section on 'Conspiracy Theories', p87). The Regent was, after all, expected to live for years; his sudden death will look very suspicious, especially since Londo was also curiously present at the equally sudden death of Emperor Cartagia – and both deaths placed Londo

closer to power. Many would suspect that Londo himself orchestrated the war, to give him an excuse to depose the Regent.

The actions of the Drakh on Centauri Prime are documented in the Centauri Republic Fact Book, but there are many tales yet to be told. There are Drakh colonies on other worlds in the Republic and they may be acting somewhat more openly there – perhaps recruiting agents to perform missions against other worlds in the Alliance or conducting more blatant experiments on the populace. Drakh laboratories may be located in the wilds of any colony world, not too far from the cities.

The Drakh have servitors of their own. While they may profess loyalty to the Drakh, they would not be Shadow allies if they lacked ambition. On worlds where there are few Drakh, these other agents of darkness may be spinning their own foul agendas.

Any Players on board White Stars during this time may be called to help find Delenn. If canon is to be preserved, they will not find her, but they might well find another fleet of Centauri warships – or other vessels in distress.

Vir is now the voice of the Republic on Babylon 5, a position of great responsibility and hardship. He does not represent an ageing but great power, or a resurgent empire, but a beaten and despised government. His 'well deserved humility' will be required as he struggles to deal with the demands of the Drazi, Brakiri, Narn and others. He will need allies – and he will treat them well. Anyone who had a good relationship with Londo might try to extend that to Vir; anyone with a bad relationship with Londo might try to make a better impression on his replacement.

Wheel of Fire (December 5th 2262)

Ambassador G'Kar returned from Centauri Prime, to be greeted by Captain Lochley. He expressed hope that things on Babylon 5 would be calmer, now that the Centauri problem was, however painfully, solved. Lochley expressed some doubt at this concept. For one thing, she noted that 'a few' Narn were waiting to see G'Kar when he came through customs. This news was pleasing to the Narn ambassador – if only a few had shown up, it meant the ardour of the Narn for his teachings had cooled somewhat, which would be a good thing.

It was at this moment that G'Kar realised that he needed to better understand human sarcasm, as a huge mob of eager followers, waving statues of him, holding up signs which

bore his image and chanting his name, swarmed to meet him. At his first syllable of speech, they bowed down.

Lochley excused herself to meet with Sheridan and Garibaldi, the latter of whom was in his room, drinking, until he was interrupted by a call from Dr Franklin, who told him the meeting was at two, not four – and it was now almost two. Still drunk, Garibaldi hurried to the meeting, where Sheridan told him to start his reports. He stumbled through a sentence or two before Sheridan curtly cut him off. Sheridan then dismissed the others, except for Delenn, whom he wished to meet with privately and Garibaldi, whom he told to stay.

Garibaldi waited pensively while Sheridan and Delenn argued outside. Finally, the President returned and sat behind his desk. Without preamble, he asked Garibaldi when he had started drinking again. Garibaldi tried to avoid the issue, but Sheridan persisted. Garibaldi told him it had been a few months and Sheridan said that fit with everything else he had seen, all the things he tried to ignore or justify. He was not, he said, angry with Garibaldi – not anymore – but he was very, very disappointed, which hurt Garibaldi worse than any screaming rage ever could. Garibaldi was not to be fired, but he was suspended, until he could work the problem out – no matter how long it took.

Franklin walked to G'Kar's quarters, through a gauntlet of waiting Narns, one of whom forced a statue on him. A stressed G'Kar welcomed him inside as the crowd surged forward to see if they could catch a glimpse of their idol through the briefly opened door. Inside, G'Kar glumly ran sand through his fingers, a meditative exercise which was singularly unsuccessful at providing him with inner peace. Franklin was there with a message – the Narn government had been trying to reach G'Kar, but the Ambassador had been refusing all calls, in an effort to have a little quiet in his life. The Kha'Ri were claiming that Nar'Shal was in turmoil, with half the populace demanding G'Kar return to rule them – a task G'Kar dramatically and absolutely refused to undertake. The other half of the populace merely wanted G'Kar to bless them and they would run Narn in his name. His popularity had been increased by



his actions on Centauri – the Narn believed it was G'Kar's presence there which allowed them to attack Centauri Prime without retribution and his survival was considered a miracle in and of itself.

G'Kar felt trapped. If he remained, Babylon 5 would be overrun with acolytes. If he went home, he would become everything he had always fought against.

As G'Kar pondered the paradoxes of existence, more worldly matters were weighing on Zack and Lochley, who watched an emergency security bulletin from EarthGov. Over a dozen attacks on Psi Corps property had occurred in the past month, all traceable to Babylon 5. The words 'Remember Byron' were scrawled at the site of every attack. The perpetrators of the attacks seemed to be amateurs, but well-equipped, well-funded amateurs, and that funding was followed back to Lyta Alexander, who was to be detained, questioned and returned to Earth.

A moody and depressed Garibaldi was sitting in his quarters, when Captain Lochley unexpectedly visited him. Garibaldi felt she was there to gloat – she had got what she wanted, namely, him out of her hair. In fact she was there to help and she understood his problem. Garibaldi challenged her to prove it and she did so masterfully, correctly analysing his rage and self-loathing. Unable to get her to leave his quarters, he stormed out. She followed him, continuing to try to reach him, finally confessing that she had the same problem he had, only more so. She talked about her time as a drug addict and a runaway and ultimately managed to convince him that she could help.

Sometime later, Zack and Lochley watched Lyta talking to an arms dealer in the Zocalo. They had wanted to wait for Sheridan before arresting her, but he was apparently a no-show. Not wishing to lose the opportunity, they went in and ordered security to move in after them.

Lyta seemed unsurprised at being surrounded by security guards and calmly sipped her drink while Zack charged her with aiding and abetting terrorist activities. She began to drum her fingers on the table and soon, all those seated or standing nearby, began to do so in unison. She angrily insisted that she was tired of being pushed around and the crowd mirrored her angry gestures. Smugly, she stood up and told Lochley that she did not choose to be arrested. As the telepathically controlled crowd moved in threateningly, Lochley turned to Zack, only to find him in the same trance as everyone else. Lyta proclaimed that one such as herself, who had been touched by Vorlons, could not be stopped... but the whine of a PPG in her ear reminded her she was not the *only* person touched by a Vorlon. President Sheridan insisted that she release her hold and she submitted to arrest, though noting that Sheridan could not be everywhere. Lochley agreed and knocked her unconscious with a single blow. Lyta was hauled off and Lochley turned to Sheridan. She wondered if maybe it would not have been better if he had killed Lyta when he had the chance – holding her was going to be difficult.

After the arrest, Garibaldi went to meet with Lochley to discuss the Lyta situation. They exchanged speculation about what was motivating her and the scope of her increased abilities. Lochley was stymied – she could not hold Lyta indefinitely and she could not try to send her back to Earth. In any event, she was glad Michael was here, because she wanted to show him something. Garibaldi interrupted her in order to apologise for his prior behaviour, then went into the customs area to see what it was Lochley wanted to show him. He looked around in confusion for a moment, seeing nothing out of the ordinary, then was overjoyed to find Lise running towards him. She had been summoned by a message Lochley had sent in Garibaldi's name.

Sheridan watched Lyta sitting alone in the brig. He explained to Franklin, who had just arrived, that she had been placed far from any other humans and that the system was on automatic. This would limit her ability to control others, at least for a time. Sheridan did not understand why she had gone down this road, but Franklin listed the long litany of traumatic events in Lyta's recent life, from her alteration by the Vorlons to the martyrdom of her lover. Sheridan felt there was something more than that, something that pushed her over the edge. Londo, Garibaldi, Lyta... there seemed to be a plague of irrationality sweeping through everyone he knew... and it seemed Delenn had

caught it, as she stormed, cursing, into the room. The Narn government would boycott all trade with Babylon 5 until G'Kar returned home – they felt he was staying out of a sense of obligation, so it was somehow their fault. Delenn grew more and more frustrated as she tried to explain the injustice of the situation, until she suddenly collapsed, unconscious.

Garibaldi explained the situation to Lise, pledging to sober up, but acknowledging it could take time. She asked him to come back to Mars with her, slightly sooner than he had planned. The two of them, together, could work through it. She was strained at trying to run Edgars Industries and he could help her there, just as she could help him with his drinking. Garibaldi finally agreed.

Then it suddenly hit him what he might be able to do with access to the resources of one of the biggest corporations on Mars and went to speak with Lyta.

In MedLab, Franklin informed Sheridan that Delenn was stable, for now, but he would need to keep a close eye on her. As a Minbari-human hybrid, things would not work the same. Sheridan was confused – what things? Then Franklin told him: Delenn was pregnant. Sheridan, perhaps for the first time in his life, was momentarily speechless.

He recovered quickly, though. Had not Franklin said they could not have children? Franklin said, no, what he said was, 'he did not know'. He thought the odds were against it – but he was never a good gambler. Sheridan peppered him with questions – would she be okay, would she be able to carry the child to term? Franklin did not know – this was wholly uncharted territory. He felt she was likely to be able to give birth, but he could not be sure.

Garibaldi found Lyta sitting sullenly in the brig and assured her he had no way to get her out, apparently in a bid to keep her from trying to rip the access codes from his mind. Nervously, he sat down and tried to talk to her. He told her that she would not do any good drugged or dead and that he could help her... and she could help him. When he pointed out the camera that was watching them, Lyta closed her eyes for a second and it shorted out.

Garibaldi laid out his proposal. He knew she was funnelling money to the anti-Psi Corps terrorists. She hated the Corps – and so did he. He talked about what Bester had done to him. He asked her to remove Bester's neural block and in return he would use Edgars Industries' influence over EarthGov to get the charges dropped. In addition, Lyta would need to leave Babylon 5. Lyta felt that was not enough and had a counter proposal.

Later, Sheridan discussed issues with Lochley, while G'Kar, unseen by them, listened in. Garibaldi spoke of how the money Lyta was using came from the Narn's payments to her. Lyta had agreed to transfer this money to a fund that would be used only to help telepaths, not to perform acts of violence – a fund Garibaldi would be overseeing. Furthermore, very soon, Lochley would get a call from a Senator in Edgars Industries' pocket who would authorise Lyta's release. This still left the problem of what to do with her once she was freed, a solution provided by G'Kar, who took that moment to show himself. He and Lyta had a common problem – neither could go home and neither could remain on Babylon 5. They would both go... out there. There was so much of the galaxy he had not seen and Lyta would be a good travelling companion. With her or without her though, he was going to leave.

Lise and Garibaldi talked. Garibaldi ran down the list of those leaving the station – himself, G'Kar, Lyta, Londo, Sheridan and Delenn, Franklin... the place was changing. Lise felt that, no matter what, he had made a good deal – his life was changing for the better. Garibaldi though, was troubled. He thought back to his meeting with Lyta and what their deal *really* was. Lyta knew she did not have the background to use her money to fight the Corps – it was tracked back to her too easily. Garibaldi though, had contacts and connections and the right skills with Edgars Industries resources. He could move money around without attracting attention. They would set up *two* accounts. The first, for show, would be auditable and completely clean with no unscrupulous activities connected to it. The second, though... the larger one... would be used to fund anti-Corps activity. Even if Garibaldi could not harm Bester directly, he could help Lyta destroy everything Bester cared about... and the neural block gave her a carrot to dangle in front of him. After two years, if Garibaldi held up his end of the bargain, she would remove the block.

The conversation turned to assurances – how did Lyta know Garibaldi would not just take the money and run? Coldly, Lyta explained that if she had any belief that he would, she would kill him then and there, a statement Garibaldi accepted as fact – but then he dug deeper. How could she? She was not a P5 any more, she was not even



a P12, she was something more and he had to know what she was. If they were to work together, he had to have the whole truth. What was she?

She was a weapon, as all telepaths were, a weapon forged by the Vorlons for their war against the shadows... but where most telepaths were the equivalent of guns, or perhaps tanks, she was something far more, the telepathic equivalent of a doomsday weapon, a virtual atomic bomb of psionic power – one which was now free to do what it wished.

Delenn tried to relax, a task made difficult by Sheridan's constant, overjoyed stare. She, in turn, was missing Londo and wondering why she had not heard from him. Sheridan laughed this off, saying Londo was most likely still celebrating his coronation.

There was no joy on Centauri Prime, however, as Emperor Mollari continued his long, silent, vigil, staring alone into the darkness of the throne room, his thoughts forever spiralling down the path of decisions which had led him to this place, the sequence of choices which left him with no choices at all.

Touched By A Vorlon

Very few beings without levels in the Vorlon Servant class can be said to have this quality. It is not a feat, skill or class ability. All those with at least one level in the Vorlon Servant Prestige Class (see the 'No Surrender, No Retreat' sourcebook) gain this quality. Others may gain it due to special circumstances, such as a Vorlon leaving a piece of themselves behind. Sheridan is the only character other than Lyta to have this quality, though Kosh's connection

to G'Kar in 'Dust to Dust' might have given it to G'Kar as well.

Those who are Touched are very resistant to control by outside forces, especially telepathy. They gain a +6 to all Will saves against telepathic control, such as Daze or Reality Fabrication and a +2 on all saves against Accidental, Surface or Deep scan.

Vorlons will not grant this lightly, as it requires leaving something of themselves behind. Only those who are chosen for a special purpose will receive this gift. With the Vorlons gone from space, no one will ever be granted this power again. However, the power may lie dormant within some characters, awaiting the time when it is most needed. Any character who performed a vital mission for a Vorlon or who acted powerfully in accordance with the Vorlon philosophy of order and obedience, may have been given this ability.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Delenn is pregnant. In general, the mere fact she is someone in a position of great power makes anything about her newsworthy, but the fact the child will be a human/Minbari crossbreed makes this extraordinary. No such child has (knowingly) been born in galactic history, though technically, the children of Valen contained at least some human DNA. Cross-species breeding does not occur in the Babylon 5 universe without some sort of extraordinary effort, involving technologies beyond those available to any of the younger races (the Triluminary is a First One relic, and cannot be recreated). There will be many who will just consider this one more exciting event... and many who will have different views.

To both humans and Minbari, racial purity is important. Delenn has battled a great deal of prejudice from her own people and won the respect of most – but not all. There are *billions* of Minbari and some of them will never release their hold on their prejudices. Some will be so angered by this 'abomination' they will forego their most sacred principles and be willing to kill a fellow Minbari (in short, to preserve the 'purity' of their race, they will betray the most important values of their race. No one ever said bigotry was logical). Others will simply take steps to kill the child – poisons, tampered medication or kidnapping and forced abortion are all possibilities. While canon shows this did not happen, it does not show no attempt was made. Humans will, likewise, be willing to do any of these things. In the ultimate irony, human bigots and Minbari bigots might find common cause, united by their irrational hatred.

If EarthGov has traced the money to Lyta, so have a lot of other people and this means a great deal of the network may be compromised. Anyone who accepted money from Lyta's anti-Corps fund could find themselves hunted by the Corps, by EarthGov or by anyone else with an interest in stopping terrorism. It can also be the case that characters did not know they were being funded by Lyta.

Garibaldi is going to need help setting up the network for Lyta. He is going to be looking for people he has worked with in the past. There are many tasks characters could do for him, from simple courier duty to complex money-laundering schemes to, at the darkest, 'taking out' people who might be getting too close to the truth. This can present some nasty moral dilemmas, as not just Psi Corps has an interest in stopping terrorism...

The Narn trade boycott, while brief, is still disruptive. Narn on the station may be denied luxuries, or even necessities, if medical supplies are also not coming from homeworld. Merchants who deal in Narn-supplied goods will begin to look for smugglers. Narn merchants who do not care for G'Kar's philosophy will view the boycott as a direct attack on their own well being.

With Garibaldi out as head of Alliance intelligence, it will be in a state of disarray until a new head is appointed. This can lead to more reliance on independent contractors to supply information. It will also offer rare windows of opportunities to conduct covert operations without being easily caught.

Objects in Motion (December 9th 2262)

The customs area was jammed up, as one particularly recalcitrant would-be visitor to the station squabbled with security. It was Tessa Holland, former 'Number One' of the Mars Resistance. Her ID had been issued by the Mars Provisional Government, not the EA, and B5s systems did not recognise it. This was Earth's problem, she felt, not hers – EarthGov's sluggishness in updating their systems was bureaucratic blackmail, a means of forcing Martian citizens to use EA identicards and undermine the nascent Martian state. A potentially messy row was interrupted by Franklin, who vouched for her. His word was good enough for Zack and Tessa was allowed to board.

Tessa was here to look for Michael Garibaldi and she seemed surprised to hear he was OK. However, 'OK' may have been a bit strong as, in his quarters, a very queasy Mr Garibaldi continued the painful process of detoxing himself, while Lise offered what support she could, albeit

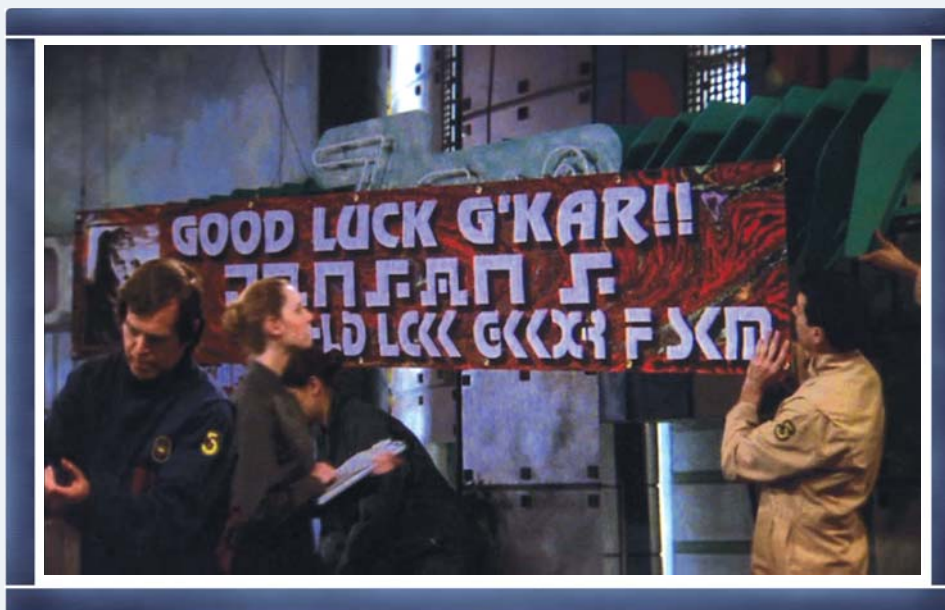
support mixed with an edge of 'you did this to yourself'.

Tessa and Franklin arrived, just as Garibaldi completed the latest round of purging. He was surprised to see Tessa so far from home. She wanted to give him the news personally – someone was going to try to kill both him and Lise in the next few days.

Tessa gave Garibaldi the run-down. Following the declaration of Martian Independence, every Earth-based company operating on Mars went into a state of panic. Decades of exploitation were coming home to roost and executives fled while records were pulped and data crystals shattered. The provisional government took steps to stop this, offering immunity to anyone who would help them and placing informants into all of the larger corporations – including Edgars Industries, which Franklin noted, worked on a lot of black projects for Clark. The telepath virus was one of many. Lise pleaded ignorance – William had kept her totally out of the loop on such things – and that was the problem. Now that she was in charge, many feared she would find out things she was never supposed to know and, since Garibaldi had the skills to help her bring any such discoveries to light, he was targeted too. Tessa did not know who the assassin was, only that the hit was planned for before Garibaldi and Lise could leave for Mars.

The followers of G'Kar were growing more numerous and insistent, making the reluctant prophet ever more eager to begin his voyage away from Babylon 5 and his unwanted cultists. One young Narn, in particular, was especially insistent. G'Kar, with the aid of security, moved past them and entered Lyta's cell in the brig.

Lyta was coolly receptive to his offer. Obviously, she did not consider this something she particularly wanted to do, but it was better than most of the proffered alternatives. She found the irony of their different situations amusing – G'Kar was fleeing because everyone wanted him and she was fleeing because no one did. G'Kar had no idea where their trip would begin, which he found exciting and which Lyta found somewhat discomfiting. Still, it was better than a cell, even if she knew G'Kar's offer was made more in the interest of securing telepath DNA than it was any



personal interest in her. G'Kar felt if she believed that, his decision to take her with him was doubly justified.

Sheridan spoke with Garibaldi about the upcoming assassination attempt. Garibaldi was to move into unregistered quarters, as part of a larger policy of keeping him out of sight. This was to be combined with an elaborately staged 'going away' party for G'Kar, at which Garibaldi was to be 'very publicly' present. This would force the killer to take his shot there, since he would not know if he would get another. Garibaldi nodded in assent, surprised and pleased that his protégé, Zack, had come up with this plan.

Elsewhere on Babylon 5, a middle-aged man chased after a security guard, asking him to hold the lift. The man thanked him, saying that it was a bad area and he did not want to be alone too long down there. The guard laconically nodded in assent, ignoring his travelling companion as best he could. This turned out to be unwise, as the balding, unassuming man pulled out a small knife and dispatched the guard with a single stroke, then removed the fallen guard's link.

Zack and Franklin puzzled over the corpse. The victim was new and had not been on the station long enough to make any enemies; there was no sign of robbery the crime was seemingly motiveless. Despite this, Zack was convinced there was a reason for the attack and he would find it.

With delicacy and skill, the killer worked on the link, trying to access the security channels. He was stymied by a failure to match the DNA sequence, but he persisted...

Tessa and Sheridan talked politics, with the former presenting a litany of complaints about Earth, who had recognised Mars' independence de jure but not de facto. An endless series of administrative roadblocks stood in the way of every activity the Martian provisional government sought to undertake and Tessa was not used to this type of battle – she could deal with bullets but not bureaucracy. Sheridan sympathised – he too had gone from being a soldier to a politician and now had to sit and listen to people he would once have just been able to shoot. Infighting among the Martian factions was also a problem – without the common enemy of Earth to hold them together, they were splitting apart and a civil war was looming – a prospect EarthGov clearly wished for. Sheridan saw a solution – since the Alliance recognised Martian independence, he could help Tessa set up an account on Minbar, where the Martian government could do its business without running through Earth, but he wanted something in return. He wanted Tessa to stay a few days, as he had an idea he wanted to play with.

The work on the link was nearly complete; a few more adjustments and... there. The assassin had broken into the security channels.

G'Kar watched the preparations for his goodbye party with mixed emotions and a young Narn watched him. The acolyte could not believe G'Kar was leaving and spoke of the obligations G'Kar had to his people – to either stay on Babylon 5 and teach, or return to Nar'Shal and lead. G'Kar's response was simple – he had no obligation but to do what he felt was right. The supplicant would not be put off – he had spent all his money to come here and learn from G'Kar. Patience thinning, G'Kar informed his would-be follower that there was nothing he could learn from him and that he was not responsible for other people's choices. Persistence was ever a trait of the Narn however and the follower continued – G'Kar *did* have a responsibility to his followers, as they had made him what he was. That G'Kar did not want to *be* what he was, was clearly something the acolyte did not realise. Finally, the young Narn showed his idol one of the statues which G'Kar had come to loath and claimed that he had been the one to make them. This broke G'Kar's last reserves of patience. He snapped the



idol in half, told his admirer to go home and stalked away. Shattered and abandoned, his soul broken like the statue, the young Narn's admiration quickly turned into loathing.

Zack arrived in MedLab to pick up the dead guard's personal effects and to see if Franklin had anything new, any link to a possible suspect in the murder. He did not and neither did Zack – whose time was limited due to the work protecting Mr Garibaldi. As Zack went through the effects, he noticed that the link was covered with adhesive – but links were bonded by a molecular adhesive keyed to the owner's DNA. The link had been substituted by the killer. Zack quickly put the pieces together – the killer now had access to the security channels, giving him all the information he needed to pull off a hit and get away.

Surrounded by cheering Narns and a few beings of other races, the killer waited for his opportunity, while the chatter from security played into his earpiece, keeping him informed of every movement of the station's watchmen. Garibaldi, watching the crowd warily, took his place on stage, while Sheridan delivered a speech praising both Garibaldi and G'Kar. He kept it uncharacteristically short and ushered G'Kar to the stage. In the watching crowd, Zack told security to send a high pitched whine to the stolen link, then he scanned around to see who was wincing. Security quickly turned on the killer, even as he drew his PPG to fire at Garibaldi but in the confusion, few noticed the angry young Narn drawing a PPG of his own, declaring G'Kar unworthy and preparing to fire.

Zack did notice and leapt to knock G'Kar out of the way, saving the ambassador – but placing Lise directly in the line of fire. Struck in the shoulder, she collapsed.

G'Kar and Garibaldi watched nervously while Franklin and his team operated on Lise. The assailant had been caught and would be prosecuted, but this was cold comfort to a man watching his fiancé undergo surgery. Franklin's prognosis was mixed – her survival was up to her. Garibaldi, unable to simply watch, stormed out of MedLab, found Zack and demanded five minutes with the man who tried to shoot him. He got it and then dragged the killer into Lyta's cell. Lyta was less than thrilled about being asked to perform yet another unpaid favour, but Garibaldi's angry insistence won her over. Even as the killer protested that he had rights, she began to scan, while Garibaldi shouted questions at him. The assassin was trained for this and tried to resist, as Lyta slowly ramped up the pressure. Finally, a moment of anger cracked the blocks and Lyta charged through the gap, pulling everything she needed, then sent the man into unconsciousness and wiped his memory of the entire episode.

It was the Board of Directors of Edgars Industries which had hired him – not someone on the Board, but the *entire* Board, working as one. Despite the lack of legally admissible evidence, Garibaldi had a plan.

G'Kar finished up his packing. Sheridan came to personally see him off and to ask him to stick around a bit longer so that Delenn could say goodbye. G'Kar regretfully said that he could not – the longer he stayed, the more likely a second incident would occur. He had purchased a long-range survey ship, perfect for exploration, and was ready to go.

After Sheridan left, G'Kar began to record a message for later delivery.

Lise awoke in MedLab, to find Garibaldi slumped next to her. She was exhausted, but she would be OK. So long as she was doped up on painkillers, she was in the perfect state of mind for what Garibaldi had planned and he went to fetch the minister he had standing by outside. He felt that before any other disasters could befall them, they should get married.

Lyta, cuffed, was led to the landing bay where G'Kar waited to greet her. He insisted she be uncuffed at once; Lyta casually shattered the cuffs with a thought, while the security guards quickly retreated. Lyta looked back, somewhat nervously, then left with G'Kar. Zack emerged from the shadows to watch them... or rather her... leave.

The Board of Directors of Edgars Industries accepted an incoming call from Mr Garibaldi, who wasted little time in confronting them with the fact that they were behind the attack that nearly killed Lise. A board member, Mr

Peretti, explained that the head of security, Gregory Fitch, was behind it all but he had sadly hung himself last night, leaving a suicide note that explained everything. Anything else would be speculation and 'impossible to prove'. Garibaldi was, of course, unfazed. He asked Peretti how his daughter was... not his legitimate one, the other one on Earth. Mr Everson, in turn, was looking well, possibly due to his adulterous affair. There were some spacings to discuss, as well...

Peretti angrily tried to interrupt, but Garibaldi continued, supremely confident. He was in his element now and revelled in it. He noted that the board's greatest fear must have been an alliance between Lise and someone capable of digging into their pasts. While it was true he no longer had access to the resources of Alliance Intelligence, he introduced someone else who *did* – Tessa, the *new* head of Alliance Intelligence. Meet the new boss, even nastier than the old boss. Tessa took over Garibaldi's litany of sins committed by the assembled board. They were behind many of the problems Mars had been having since independence and behind many of the problems Mars was having during its *fight* for independence. If even half of their shenanigans reached the Martian populace, well, 'skinned alive' was the first term to come to mind. Garibaldi thanked Tessa for her help and she left. Peretti could barely begin to bluster again before Garibaldi continued. Tessa was just discussing the short term. In the long term, Garibaldi had a lot of plans for Edgars Industries... and a cheque for half a million credits, to be deposited in a secret account. Should either he or Lise die of anything but old age, that half million would go to a fund which would pay for assassins to take out each and every one of the board... and a hundred thousand credits a head would attract the best of the best. Peretti understood. Garibaldi told the board that he expected their resignations before he arrived on Mars.

Tessa and Franklin drank together in the Zocalo, discussing her new job and the irony of it – such as her taking up residence on Babylon 5 coinciding with his departure. Their relationship would not be practical, what with both of them being workaholics, him living on Earth, her on Babylon 5... on the other hand he had an hour before his next duty shift, in which they could celebrate her new job...

Sheridan greeted Delenn, who informed him the new Alliance headquarters on Minbar were nearly complete. Sheridan took the news with a hint of sadness. He was going to miss Babylon 5 but he would adjust. Garibaldi, heading out on his own flight to Mars, met them. Lise went ahead, leaving Garibaldi alone to say goodbye to his old friends.

Delenn tearfully watched him go and then noted she and Sheridan would be next to leave. Then it occurred to her she had never walked the five-mile length of the station end to end. She set off to do so and Sheridan accompanied her.

Tessa Holland

7th Level Human Agent/3rd level soldier/1st Level Diplomat

Hit Points: 27

Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

DV: 18 (+8 Reflex)

Attacks: +8/+3 melee or +10/+5 ranged

Special Qualities: Covering Fire, Security Systems, Skill Mastery (Gather Information, Intimidate, Listen), Sneak Attack 1d6

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +9

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

Skills: Bluff +14, Computer Use +14, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +14, Forgery +6, Gather Information +15, Hide +13, Intimidate +14, Listen +15, Move Silently +13, Sense Motive +14, Spot +13, Technical (electronics) +14, Technical (mechanical) +11

Feats: Alertness, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (unarmed), Weapon Specialisation (unarmed)

Tessa Holland has gone from being a rebel to a politician – a difficult transition. She has learned the basics of being polite when she has to be, but it is not something she likes to do. Her new role as head of Alliance Intelligence suits her much better and, in that role, she is very likely to deal with Players. If they are lucky, it will be as an ally.

Tangled in Red Tape

The Earth Alliance is doing everything it can to thwart Martian independence while still sticking to the letter of the treaties. Anyone using Martian identicards, currency, credit chips and so on will face delays and frustration. Any such usage will either increase costs by 10% (for 'administrative overheads' or 'the costs of upgrading our systems') or time required by 20% (for 'additional clearances' or 'confirmations'). This can delay boarding on starships, frustrate shoppers and so on.

Corporate Politics

EA Corporations are often prepared to deal with dramatic changes in intergalactic politics – the risks of the seizure of property held on worlds outside the Alliance or a sudden shift in tariffs and trade regulations are figured into the cost

of doing business. When an Earth corporation ponders opening a factory on Nar'Shal or a distribution centre on Brakos, it considers these risks. What few corporations considered was a civil war within the Alliance, and even fewer ever imagined a world in Earth's own system would suddenly become independent. Suddenly, a corporation that once operated in one nation now operates in two. Rapid change scares people and scared people do stupid things.

Corporate influence on politics is nothing new and it is about as great in the 23rd century as it was in the 21st. Power must be exerted tacitly, not overtly. Open bribery is rare, but 'campaign donations' are common and are seen as merely 'protecting one's interests'. However, those corporations which do business directly with the government often have closer and darker ties. There is very little R&D work done by the government itself; it is almost always farmed out to private interests. Much of this, even if secret, is legitimate – new weapons systems, new communications technologies – and while bribery and corruption is inevitable, it rarely reaches exceptional levels. However, some business dealings are wholly illegal and 'deniability' is the main concern for both the government and the corporations involved. Reverse-engineered shadow technology, industrial secrets stolen from allied races and biological weapons all fall into the latter category. Corporations involved in such things will kill to keep the secret from getting out and the government will either look the other way or actively, but covertly, help them.

Edgars Industries is only one of many businesses suddenly caught up in 'interesting times'. The remoteness of Mars has made it ideal for work on secret projects – it is easy to hide anything in the mazes of tunnels and domes. It is also easy to land spaceships far from sight, allowing for the transfer of items or personnel. Furthermore, 'accidents' are common on Mars, so common no one will look too closely at a dome suddenly breached or an air recycler which breaks down, leading to the quiet suffocation of a few unfortunate workers at a remote base...

The new government of Mars has little interest in preserving the secrets of EarthGov. It will use whatever it finds as a weapon – it may reveal dark projects in order to weaken any aura of moral superiority EarthGov may hold over the 'secessionist' Martians or it may use the threat of revelation to get companies formerly in Earth's pocket to work more closely with Mars.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

The new head of Alliance Intelligence has a lot of work ahead of her. Mr Garibaldi's network of contacts, operatives and informants tended to be both informal and personal – meaning, many were willing to trust him, but are unsure about her. Likewise, her own information networks are fairly provincial – she may know everything occurring on Mars but the head of Alliance Intelligence needs to have eyes and ears everywhere from the Centauri Royal Court to the ice mines of Mannil. This offers a lot of opportunities to the Players. Characters who were once Mars-centric and who earned Tessa's trust when she was just 'Number One' may find their horizons expanding greatly.

Mr Garibaldi also has a lot of need for operatives. His very public role as head of Edgars Industries limits his ability to get 'hands on'. He needs a lot of deniability, as he is now a 'respectable businessman'. Tracking down every dirty little secret at Edgars will take more than mere access to computer files. There will be labs that are just notations on a map, projects described with meaningless code names and so on, all of which will require hands-on investigation.

The Board of Directors may be down, but are they out? Garibaldi may be underestimating how much risk the blackmailed board members are willing to take. Some of them might decide the risk of assassination is worth the price of being able to strike back at Mr Garibaldi (though the rest of the board might disagree with the lone wolf who makes such a decision!). Others may have networks of their own, which can attack him indirectly – in which case, he will want to find the proof of connection before acting in response.

G'Kar and Lyta are primarily supposed to be exploring uncharted worlds, but circumstances can take them anywhere and given their notoriety, they will attract both friends and foes in abundance. Wherever they land, chaos will not be far behind and the characters could easily be caught up in the middle of it.

Objects At Rest (December 20th 2262)

Neither Lochley nor Sheridan could sleep and both were in C&C, staring out at the stars. A year had passed since Lochley took command of the station. Lochley rhetorically asked where the time had gone and Sheridan told her it had gone beyond the rim, a statement that Lochley tried to interpret, then dropped. Sheridan moved from the philosophical to the pragmatic. He did not want a celebration when he and Delenn left. As he pondered his departure, he realised how much the place meant to him and how hard it was to really face leaving. Lochley excused herself to get breakfast, while Sheridan continued to watch the stars drift past and time fly rimward.

Vir wandered towards his corridor and noticed Ta'Lon impatiently trying to get G'Kar to open his door. Vir informed the Narn that G'Kar was a few days gone and was not planning to return. This confused Ta'Lon, who had been summoned from Nar'Shal by G'Kar. Seeking an answer, the Narn warrior forced the door open and entered, where his voice triggered a recorded message for him.

G'Kar apologised for leaving a recorded message, but circumstances had forced him off the station ahead of schedule. With G'Kar gone, someone else needed to speak for the Narn... and G'Kar wished that person to be Ta'Lon, whom G'Kar thought would be someone who could get things *done*. G'Kar had become a distraction when the Narn needed direction and purpose. Ta'Lon's strength and level-headedness would serve the Narn well.



Other replacements were being made. In the Zocalo, Franklin spoke to Dr Hobbs, telling her of his decision to have her take over as chief of staff once he departed. Other doctors had more skill in specific areas, but she had the broadest range of experience – and she was willing to stand up for what she believed in, a trait Franklin knew was as vital to the role as medical skill. She was to take command immediately. Franklin wished her luck, then went to say his farewells to Sheridan.

Delenn's packing received a joyful interruption – Lennier, who had taken advantage of a break in training to surprise her and to help ensure her safe arrival on Minbar. His arrival gave Delenn a chance to take a break from packing and while she busied herself finding food, he glared balefully at a photograph of her and Sheridan.

Tessa reported on the latest Intelligence. Nothing more than a minor border skirmish between Drazi and Brakiri, linked to the use of a brothel employing the former by the latter. The year that had begun with such noise was ending quietly. Tessa was to stay on Babylon 5, despite the Alliance moving to Minbar, because her ability to gather and integrate intelligence would be much greater there, something Garibaldi realised when he decided moving to Mars meant giving up any chance of resuming his job as head of Alliance Intelligence. Speaking of Garibaldi...

On Mars, the new head of Edgars Industries was setting up shop, addressing a group of six employees – who were wondering why they had been selected. They had been called, Garibaldi explained, because they were troublemakers, whistleblowers, people with an attitude problem. They were to be the new Board of Directors and their job was to tell Garibaldi where he was screwing up.

Franklin, with only one wistful glance backwards, departed the station.

A White Star arrived at Babylon 5, while ISN discussed rumours that this was the ship that would bring Sheridan and Delenn to Minbar, a fact that Sheridan had not wanted to be widely known. Before he could fume about it further, Lennier arrived to inform him and Delenn that their belongings had been stowed aboard and all that remained was to depart. Delenn went to perform a final inspection of their quarters, while Lennier and Sheridan talked somewhat awkwardly. Her inspection completed, Delenn rejoined her husband and the three of them entered a lift...

...which opened onto a huge crowd. A sheepish Lochley told Sheridan that since ISN had already disclosed their travel plans, he might as well say a few words. Taking Delenn's hand in his, he walked through the admiring

crowd, until he stood at the centre of it. Delenn was the one to speak and she spoke of the languages she had to learn when she first came to the station, saying that one of the hardest words she had to master in other tongues was 'Goodbye' – a word for which there was no true Minbari equivalent. So, she would not say goodbye – their souls were a part of this place and would remain behind, even when they had gone.

At the final point of departure, Zack was waiting, one of the last of the 'old gang' to stay behind. He would, he claimed, stay until they turned out the light – a prophecy that would turn out to be correct.

Followed by Lennier, Sheridan and Delenn walked down the passageway and off of Babylon 5.

Aboard the White Star, Lennier informed the two that he had asked the Captain to remain behind on Babylon 5 – it would be more symbolic, he felt, if the two of them commanded the ship on its voyage home. Happily, Sheridan took charge and ordered the craft to come about, and then to match rotation with the station. Looking back, they could see the observation window on C&C and waiting there, watching them go, the new crew – Dr Hobbs, Captain Elizabeth Lochley, Intelligence Chief Tessa Holland, Ambassador Vir Cotto, Ambassador Ta'Lon and Security Chief Zack Allen. The old guard was gone, but the new guard stood ready, waiting and able to carry on. They would forge their own stories and leave their own legacies. Captain Lochley and President Sheridan saluted each other across the void and Sheridan gave the order to depart.

Aboard the White Star, Sheridan paced in his quarters until, finally, he headed out for a walk. His attempt to calm his nerves was shattered by a flood of Minbari and humans running the other way, in response to a recently discovered weapon coolant leak. Sheridan charged ahead, finding a Ranger trying to repair the damage. The Ranger succumbed to the fumes and fell unconscious just as a partition slid shut to seal off the area, trapping both him and Sheridan.

Lennier, following close behind saw Sheridan trapped behind the clear door. He reached for the access panel and then, slowly, pulled back his hand. As Sheridan shouted his name, Lennier took a step or two backwards, then turned and ran.

Toxic vapours were filling the sealed chamber. Sheridan took the fighting pike from the fallen Ranger, extended it, and began to batter against the door. The bashing proved ineffective, but using the force of the poles extension

mechanism did the trick, shattering the glass. Sheridan and the Ranger were freed and escaped just as Lennier, wracked by guilt, returned. He and Sheridan stared at each other for a moment and then Delenn's arrival triggered a decision. Lennier turned and fled, taking a fighter and heading off into hyperspace, even as Delenn pleaded with him to return.

Later, Delenn and Sheridan talked. Lennier's diary had been found and Delenn now understood the depth of Lennier's feelings for her, as well as the onetime aide's strong disapproval of her relationship with Sheridan. She had long known something of this, but had not suspected the extent of it. Her claim that Lennier did not mean Sheridan harm was somewhat difficult for her husband to accept, however. She viewed it as a moment of weakness that undid a lifetime of service and he would spend the rest of his life in shame for it. Even if Lennier had been coming back to save him, something Sheridan would never know for sure, he had still crossed the line and there would need to be a price. Despite this, Sheridan decided that what happened would remain private and his coughing and weakness would be explained away as a minor cold. He would give Lennier 'room to breathe' until he and Delenn could talk with him.

Beneath a sky ablaze with celebratory fireworks, Sheridan and Delenn entered the new Alliance Headquarters, an astounding, cathedral-like building of crystal and glass, overseeing a small city. His wonder was cut short by a booming, friendly and familiar voice – Emperor Mollari had come to Minbar.

The three of them ate dinner, while Londo, seemingly almost his old self, full of bluster and self-confidence, disseminated on the joys of rulership, the chief of which, he felt, was seeing those who hated him and wished him dead have to endure his success. Delenn, never one to shy away from hard questions, brought up Londo's behaviour on Centauri Prime, which was far more hostile than his current jovial attitude. He dismissed this as mere showmanship, required to get his people fired up. Politics and friendship were separate things and when he heard Delenn was with child, politics had to be set aside in the name of joy. Indeed, he wished to raise a toast, but there seemed to be



no alcohol... a fact confirmed by Sheridan. Due to the risks posed by alcohol to the Minbari, he had left all of his supply back on the station. Londo's disappointment at this was great, greater than Sheridan would ever suspect – for if Londo could drink, he could lull the keeper to sleep and maybe tell Sheridan and Delenn something of the truth. As it was, he was forced to go through with the painful charade forced upon him by his Drakh-given parasite... a parasite Delenn almost glimpsed as it exerted its will on Londo, shimmering just out of phase with the rest of the universe on his shoulder. Her momentary glimpse of the thing vanished as Londo changed the subject to his gift – a stylish urn. It was, he explained, an ancient Centauri custom, a gift to be given to the heir of the throne when he or she came of age and, since he was planning on leaving no heirs, they might as well have it.

A Minbari whispered something to Delenn and she excused herself, while Sheridan accepted the gift. Londo explained that it should be given to their child on his or her 16th birthday. Sheridan noted the bottom had been sealed, which Londo claimed was due to the fact the urn contained water taken from the river which flowed past the first imperial palace, two millennia ago.

Delenn made her way to her quarters, still cluttered with packing crates and boxes. She triggered a holographic projector, Lennier's image appeared. She asked him to return, but he refused. All he had to say was that he had never meant Sheridan any harm, never wished for it to happen... it just happened and he could not ask for forgiveness. His call was solely to apologise one more time and to let her know he was going away, until he could find some way to redeem himself. Delenn tried to convince

him to stay – she could not imagine a life without him in it. Lennier assured her that would not happen. He knew, with utter certainty, that they would meet again. It was, perhaps, the only thing he was still utterly sure of. He knew he would never earn her love, but he would one day earn her forgiveness. Then he vanished.

Londo took his leave of them, with one final message: That they were his friends and always would be, no matter what happened. Two royal guards appeared and Londo went with them, seeming more a prisoner flanked by his keepers than an emperor escorted by his entourage.

On the Centauri cruiser, Londo looked down on the surface of Minbar, while a rasping voice said he had done well and would be rewarded with an hour free. A servant handed Londo a drink. ‘Now what?’ asked Londo, and the voice replied ‘Now we await the passage of years.’

On Minbar, in the urn, a keeper waited.

His first night passed fitfully. Sheridan awoke and began to record a message. Londo’s visit had caused him to think about his child’s coming of age, which was 21 for humans – but Sheridan had probably only 19 years left. He began to record a message to give to his child when that day came, a day he knew he would not live to see.

Alliance Headquarters

The headquarters of the ISA is a small city, as befits the capitol of a government uniting well over a hundred worlds. The Office of the President, which includes living quarters for the current Chief Executive and his staff, overlooks the main landing field. Surrounding this are other administrative buildings. Much of the ISA Complex is empty as of December, 2262, waiting to be filled as the slow process of staffing the bureaucracy takes place. In time, this city will become, not just the centre of government for the Alliance, but a trading and meeting place for all races, a cosmopolitan city on the homeworld of what was once one of the galaxies most isolationist races.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

Lennier is lost, alone, desperate and ashamed. He is on a quest to redeem himself and he will do almost anything in pursuit of that goal, taking any risk required. He may well seek the aid of the characters in pursuit of some noble, but very dangerous, goal that could range from attacking Drakh to ferreting out unknown dangers to the Alliance. Players who have met Lennier before may be surprised at how grim and dangerous he has become.

Ta’Lon will be facing a difficult job, though not so difficult as that faced by Vir. The Narn Regime is in tatters internally, but it has never been in so strong a position diplomatically. With the Centauri gone, the Regime is one of the greatest powers in the Alliance and their new-found ability to work with other races has only strengthened their position. Ta’Lon’s greatest difficulty will be in balancing Narn nationalism and racial pride against the needs of the Alliance. His warrior nature will sometimes make more delicate acts of diplomacy difficult and he will need aid in this. He may also, at times, need the advice of G’Kar, who can be hard to contact – sending Players off on a quest to find the reclusive Narn, somewhere deep in unexplored space...

This episode sets up a new ‘Command Staff’ for Babylon 5 and has tremendous potential, as the years following this point are under-documented in canon. Players eager to take on powerful roles might be interested in a campaign where they play Ta’Lon, Tessa, Lochley, Vir, etc – essentially being the ‘stars’ of the next several ‘seasons’. Another option is to change who the ‘replacements’ are. Londo might decide he needs Vir back at home (only a little fudging will be needed to make this conform to the canonical future of Centauri Prime) and so a different Centauri (a character) ends up as the new ambassador. If a Narn character has won G’Kar’s favour, perhaps he will be picked over Ta’Lon. Lochley may choose to rotate to a different post after the stresses of her first year, leaving a new EarthForce officer to take command. This allows the Players to play their own characters in positions of power with only a minor impact on canon.

Still another option is to keep all the characters as they are, but to begin the campaign in January, 2263. New characters will be able to interact with a new Command Staff against a backdrop of mostly-unexplored events. Somewhere in the next few years, there is the telepath war, the Drakh plague and more, but there is ample unexplored territory that a skilled Games Master could explore.

Sleeping in Light (December 8th 2281)

It was twenty years since the end of the Shadow War, twenty years since the founding of the Interstellar Alliance, and twenty years since John Sheridan died on Z’ha’dum and was reborn thanks to the power of Lorien, power which, though great, was still finite. Lorien could not stop death, only hold it at bay for a time. Twenty years.

The weight of this deadline, now coming due, pulled at Sheridan. Unable to sleep, he donned his robes of office and

wandered the headquarters of the ISA. From a balcony, he looked out over the city-sized sprawl of buildings that now housed the administrative centres of the alliance, reflecting on what he had managed to build in his life. His musings were disturbed by Delenn, who was likewise unable to sleep. She joined him on a bench looking out over the city, where he intended to do something he had not done in his two decades on Minbar – watch the sun rise. He wanted to carry the image with him.

This had been the third night in a row he had dreamed of Lorien. Delenn clung to the hope that the dreams did not prophecy that the shadows were beginning to fall, but Sheridan had never been one to shy away from even the grimmest of truths. He could feel his body starting to slow down, to wear out. The charge of life energy was ebbing fast. There was only a small amount of time left, time to accomplish a few vital tasks.

Together, they watched the sun shine through the crystal spires of the city.

On Earth, an aide read off the days events to General Susan Ivanova, an endless sequence of public appearances and dull meetings. The tedium of the litany was interrupted as a guard came flying through the door, following a young man in a Ranger's uniform. As one of the guards apologised, the Ranger said he had a message and that Ivanova would know who it was from. As she accepted the envelope, she dressed down the guard, reminding him that Rangers were to be admitted immediately, despite 'protocol'. She ignored his protests, read the message and announced she was going to Minbar – public appearances be damned.

Vir Cotto... *Emperor* Vir Cotto... was enjoying some of the perks of office. Two of them, to be precise, both brunettes. A member of the palace guard reluctantly interrupted these affairs of state to present a courier from Minbar, bearing a message Vir had been sadly expecting. He ordered all of his appointments cancelled for the next several days.

Michael Garibaldi was studying the sports pages when his daughter, Mary and Dr Franklin, returned from the tennis courts, to which Mary hastily returned, after the

worn-out Franklin collapsed on the couch. Franklin and Garibaldi exchanged some small talk – Edgars Industries was holding steady, Franklin was kept busy in his post as chief of xenobiological research – when Mary re-entered the room to announce a visitor for her father. A Ranger entered, silently handed Garibaldi an envelope and left. Knowing full well the contents of it, he asked Mary to leave the room for a moment. The two of them would be going to Minbar to say goodbye.

A few days later on Minbar, Franklin tried to examine Sheridan, a task made difficult by the near-impossibility of understanding precisely what Lorien did to him. Stephen tried to dodge the issue of exactly how long Sheridan had left, but finally admitted it would be a few days, at most a week.

Shortly afterwards, the gathering of old friends was in full bloom as Garibaldi and Franklin related a story about a purloined data crystal, a dead cat and a Pak'ma'ra. While Sheridan, Franklin and Garibaldi laughed over the tale, Ivanova remained reserved. Vir spoke of something that had happened to him and Londo. They had been passing by the Pak'ma'ra quarters when they heard them singing, something which was not known, even to Franklin, as part of Pak'ma'ra behaviour. The singing was beautiful, almost beyond description and managed to even bring a tear to Londo's eye. Vir reflected that he missed Londo, despite all Londo had done and all they had been through.

Sheridan proposed a toast: To absent friends, in memory still bright. Each named one who had passed on – G'Kar, Lennier, Londo, Marcus. They drank.





They talked long into the night. Vir passed out early and Ivanova walked off alone – or tried to. Delenn spotted her and followed. Ivanova said she had been watching John and she could not tell anything was wrong. She also did not know how Delenn was handling this. There had been twenty years to talk about it and prepare, Delenn said, and though her voice was cracking, she said she was as ready as anyone could be. She would miss him and so would Susan, who was beginning to resent the number of friends she had buried over the years. Her life was becoming hollow and joyless, with no sense of purpose anymore. Seeking to change the subject, she asked about David, Sheridan and Delenn's son. He was, Delenn said, on a training mission in Drazi space and John did not wish to interrupt it.

Delenn then asked something important of Ivanova – would she take over as head of the Rangers once John was gone? Delenn wanted a human and knew Ivanova was unhappy with her job on Earth. In this role, she would be able to build something, not merely be a cog in an administrative machine. Ivanova would think on it.

As she left, Sheridan rejoined Delenn and the two of them headed off to bed, but not to sleep. John was wide-awake, pondering tomorrow, which he realised was going to be a Sunday on Earth. Old memories of Sunday drives came to him and he resolved to take one. Delenn realised what this meant – that he intended to head into space to die alone. His death deep in space would help perpetuate the mythic elements of the Alliance, something to help keep his legend alive.

Early the next morning, Sheridan donned his old uniform one last time and prepared to leave. Delenn met him to say

her final goodbyes. The others would awake soon; Sheridan needed to leave now if he was to leave at all. They embraced for one final time.

A curiously dark and empty Babylon 5 played host to a distinguished visitor. Sheridan was greeted by a harried EarthForce officer, who explained there was no one else on board but the shutdown crew and a few others. The station, he said, was redundant – the Alliance did most of the work the station used to do and what with budget cuts back home and all... well, the station was to be decommissioned. Sheridan glumly mused that

he and the station were still tied together, as a wave of weariness passed over him. He decided to take one last look around, travelling through the empty Zocalo, where Zack met him. He was there, as he had promised, until they turned the lights out. Like Sheridan, he heard the voices, the echoes of the millions who had come and gone through the station over the past 25 years.

Zack offered to join him for lunch, but Sheridan did not have the time. He headed out again, to Corianna 6, where the Shadow War had been won twenty years before.

By the time the ship reached Corianna, Sheridan was on the verge of death. His voice weak and his consciousness fading, he ordered the ship into normal space. He ordered the lights off and stared out the darkened viewport into the infinite stars. As the last traces of his life flickered, light began to fill the bridge from outside and a familiar voice intoned an equally familiar litany of questions: Who are you? What do you want? Why are you here? – and then, an unfamiliar one – 'Where are you going?'

Weakly, Sheridan turned to face Lorien.

They had been waiting for him beyond the Rim, Lorien said, and it was time to rest. A brilliant light filled the ship, turning all within to perfect white and Sheridan closed his eyes one last time.

Later, an expedition would find his ship, but no trace of his body.

On Babylon 5, those whom the place had touched gathered to say goodbye to it, as they had said goodbye, a few days earlier, to its captain. Without much ceremony, a maintenance worker flipped the main power off. After the last shuttle left, a fleet of ships from a dozen or more races lined up to provide a final salute, as the station was ripped apart from end to end, consumed in fire.

For the rest of her life, Delenn would wake before dawn, to watch the sun come up.

'Babylon 5 was the last of the Babylon stations. There would never be another. It changed the future and it changed us. It taught us that we have to create the future, or others would do it for us. It showed us that we have to care for one another, for if we don't, who will?... and that true strength sometimes comes from the most unlikely places. Mostly, though, I think it gave us hope, that there can always be new beginnings.'

Twenty Years After

This episode is another atypical one, presenting something rarely seen in fiction – the acknowledgement that life goes on. The story did not end in 2262 and it still has not ended in 2281. The Alliance will struggle onwards, enduring for at least a thousand years. Delenn and Sheridan will become figures of legend. Even as the veterans of the old battles toast absent friends and look forward to the lives they have built for themselves, there are, somewhere, new battles forming. Babylon 5 is gone, but the things that made it necessary – war, hatred, intolerance, fear – remain. Centauri Prime is finally free of the Drakh, but they and other servants of the Shadows remain hidden throughout the galaxy. There are still great battles to be fought, petty scams to be run, love, hatred, great visions, petty jealousies, people doing the right thing for the wrong reasons or the wrong things for the right reasons – in short, all the building blocks of stories remain.

The period after 2281 is wide open. The galaxy will have continued to expand. What new races and governments lie coreward or spinward? After twenty years, has the Narn Regime stabilised? The Centauri Republic is free to rejoin the greater community

of worlds, but how well will it be received? Have boundaries and alliances shifted?

While it is impossible to predict where future canonical Babylon 5 media may go, it seems very likely that most of it will be concentrated in the 2260s, leaving the post 'Sleeping in Light' period wide open for a new campaign.

Scenario and Campaign Hooks

The Shadows always hid between their periodic incursions into the galaxy. It is certainly possible some of them hid so well – in a hyperspace fold, in some sort of deep stasis, beneath a dead world forgotten even by their kindred – that they missed their last wake-up call, twenty-some years before. Something could happen to return them to the galaxy. Will they join their fellows out on the Rim, or will they decide those who left had abandoned their calling and that now, without the Vorlons around, they have the chance to finally win? They will be low on resources and influence, but still possess knowledge and power. A new, much more subtle, Great War could begin...

The ISA is expanding into unknown space, adding new worlds and new races to its roster – but, sooner or later, it will meet a power it cannot absorb. There may be another Alliance out there, a union of races, but one which is more militaristic, an Alliance founded on force and fear, not on co-operation. The thin line of worlds between the two expanding frontiers becomes a battleground; whichever side sways them to join will have the advantage and will slowly, inexorably, crush the others. The campaign is set in this fringe realm.



Rules Additions

Psionics

Telepathic Vanishing

The power to 'cloud men's minds' is one long associated with telepaths. Psi Corps might disapprove of it, firstly because it involves subtle, but still illegal, telepathic contact and second, because it is fairly obvious that it has been used. Byron and his followers, not being bound by Corps rules and not feeling constrained to pretend to be no better than mundanes, freely flaunt this ability.

It is not invisibility. A telepath cannot vanish from plain sight. Rather, they can cause a momentary shift in perception, especially time perception. The subject looks away for a second, or glances at a magazine, for what they think is barely a second... but somewhat more time has passed, time enough for the telepath to also dim out sounds, enabling them to 'softly and suddenly vanish away' (indeed, some teeps call this ability 'snarking', in reference to Lewis Carroll).

Vanishing

P-Rating: P6

Prerequisite: Surface Scan

Range: Line of Sight

Telepathy Check: DC 12

Concentration: Yes

Multiple Subjects: No

If the subject fails his save against this power, he will look away – glance at a BabCom screen, check his watch, turn as if he had heard someone call his name behind him – and his attention will remain distracted for $10 + 3d10$ seconds. However, he will only be aware of $1d4$ seconds passing, unless someone deliberately tries to snap him out of his trance. If the telepath passes directly into the subjects sensory awareness (walking in front of him, touching him, calling his name) the effect is lifted.

Deathbed Scans

One of the most unpleasant tasks a telepath is asked to undergo is performing a deathbed scan. As a being dies, their mind begins to unravel; neurotransmitters fire randomly, memories surge from subconscious to conscious and back again, tissue and nerve damage turns the mind into a maelstrom of thought and feeling. Navigating a dying mind is akin to flying through a hurricane.

Performing a deathbed scan may be vital to solving a puzzle or saving lives, but it is also deeply traumatic. Mechanically, a deathbed scan works just like a normal Deep Scan, but when the target takes subdual damage he must make a Fortitude save at a DC of $5 + (5 \times \text{the amount of subdual damage dealt})$ or die. Furthermore, the patient may be dying from his wounds. Each round the deathbed scan progresses, a check must be made to see if the patient has expired.

Very often, the target will know he is dying. The telepath will sometimes encounter the targets own self-awareness, talking to him as if he was standing in front of him. The target may pass on a message before death or curse the injustice of it all, depending on his nature.

If the telepath is inside someone's mind when he dies, there is a risk of serious trauma. The telepath must make a Will save at the same DC to avoid taking $1d6$ points of temporary Wisdom and Charisma damage. Furthermore, if this save is failed, a second Will save at the same DC must be made to avoid taking 1 point of permanent Wisdom or Charisma damage. The DC of this save is increased by 2 for each deathbed scan performed within the space of 1 year.

Psychometry

Psychometry, or object reading, is a classic 'psychic' ability that has seen little play in the Babylon 5 universe. When a sentient being dies a violent death, there is a brief surge of psychic energy that permeates his surroundings. This is faint, but it is there. The following rules cover it:

Any telepath within 10 feet (+ 5 feet for each point of Charisma bonus) of someone who is violently killed, may pick up a surge of their thoughts as if they had just performed an accidental scan. Apply the rules as normal, as if the telepath had touched the target.

After the death, there is still a lingering trace of presence. A telepath may attempt to read the thoughts and memories of the dead individual by touching items he was wearing or even the walls or floor near to the point of death. This is done as per a deep scan, with the DC increasing by 2 for each minute after death. Beyond five minutes, no trace remains, no matter how strong the telepath is (telepaths beyond P12 may be able to pick up traces for somewhat longer, though the DC continues to increase. Assume that the time doubles for each P level beyond P12 (ten minutes at P13, 20 at P14, and so on).

The act does not cause the trauma of deathbed scans, since the telepath is reading echoes, not following a living mind into the void beyond.

Bloodhounds

The Bloodhound units were created soon after the first MRA (Metahuman Regulatory Agency) hunter units. While it was clear that the MRA's front-line hunters had to be the strongest telepaths possible, sending P12s against runaway P2s and P3s was simply overkill. While the hunters were chasing down one low-P teep, another five scattered into the underground. The hunters needed help, they needed more eyes and hands and minds. The MRA authorised the creation of special Bloodhound units, made up of strong (P9-P11) telepaths to help in hunting down rogues. These Bloodhounds were trained to work together in small teams, quickly sweeping through a whole apartment block or large crowd of people with quick surface scans to find the hidden blips.

The tradition of the Bloodhound units has continued for almost a century and a half. Their duties have been expanded – in addition to their primary purpose of helping the Psi Cops hunt down rogues, Bloodhounds are also called in by normal security forces to locate assassins, terrorists and other enemies of the state that must be located and secured immediately. While on duty, the Bloodhounds have a special exemption from the normal rules about unauthorised scans and are permitted to freely scan anyone they encounter while performing a sweep. Officially, this is limited to surface scans, but Bloodhounds who probe deeply when unnecessary are usually exonerated by the subsequent inquiry. By telepathically co-ordinating their scans, the Bloodhounds can methodically work through a large number of people very quickly. They can even combine their scanning ability in the same way a set of radio dishes can be combined into a single huge receiver, vastly extending their effective range.

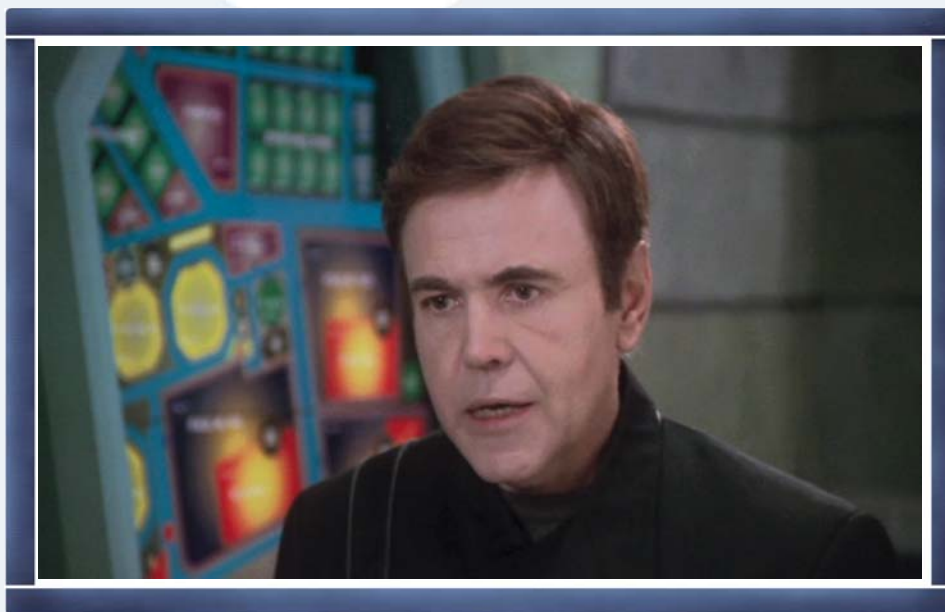
Perhaps because the Bloodhounds are partially exempt from the rules on scanning, they are even more mistrusted than the rest of the Psi Corps. Even their fellow telepaths feel somewhat uneasy around a pack. The Bloodhounds are therefore much more insular than most

telepaths; their only friends and only loyalty is to the pack. Each pack has its own unique name and traditions, some of which go back for four or five generations. While the Corps is still mother and father to the hounds, the rest of the pack and only the pack are their siblings. Some packs even encourage their members to pair off and breed and there are Bloodhounds whose lineage within the pack goes back three generations.

Packs live together in specially built barracks attached to Psi Corps centres or bases. There is no official command structure in a pack – some decide everything through consensus, while others arrange themselves in order of telepathic ability. Each pack is assigned a liaison officer, unimaginatively referred to as a handler.

Bloodhound packs are not called into every investigation or rogue hunt, as they tend to disrupt the normal functioning of whatever base or city they visit. A pair of Psi Cops can slip in, arrest a rogue and leave again without anyone except senior staff knowing about it but two dozen Bloodhounds scanning everyone in sight is much less subtle. The packs are the best method for flushing rogues out if the Psi Cops run out of avenues of investigation – a mass scan will turn up *something* worth pursuing. Single Bloodhounds are also used to track down rogues in cases where the Psi Cops are too over-extended. The Bloodhounds actually find the rogues and the Cops come in to make the arrest.

Bloodhound characters usually take the Bloodhound Prestige Class from the *Earth Alliance Fact Book*. More information on Bloodhounds can be found in the Psi Corps Handbook.



Multiple Personalities

Multiple personality disorder is usually the result of extreme trauma, such as childhood sexual abuse or exposure to violence at a young age, which literally causes the brain to fragment in order to save itself, bringing out different aspects of its personality in order to deal with the stresses of life, saving the 'core' personality by hiding bits and pieces of it inside different shells. A full discussion of this form of mental illness is beyond the scope of this book; what follows are some suggestions for dealing with it.

It is very difficult to identify someone with this disorder from casual conversation. Most of the multiple personalities tend to be fully realised, with unique speech patterns, body languages and accents. In some cases, one personality may read, write, or speak languages the others do not – and vice-versa. Personalities may remain dominant for days, weeks, or years, or they may shift rapidly over the course of minutes. Many individuals with this disorder manage to live with it, leaving themselves notes from one personality to another. In some cases, the personalities can be conscious simultaneously, debating internally; in other cases only one personality at a time is dominant.

Someone with this disorder will have $2 + 1d4$ primary personalities, all fully developed individuals and a 25% chance of $1d10$ additional, lesser, personalities which are fragmented or incomplete. Fifty percent of all XP earned is shared equally among all personalities, while the rest goes only to the personality that earned it. A character with this disorder may have one personality, which is a 1st level Soldier and another that is a 1st level Lurker.

Personality shifts can occur during times of stress – when the character is placed in a highly stressful situation (combat, being chased by Psi Cops, on a starship under attack), the personality best able to deal with the situation may emerge and take control. Fighting this is difficult – a Will Save (DC 20) is required to force one personality down when circumstances would cause it to come to the fore and this check must be made each round that the stress persists.

Detecting multiple personalities via telepathy is likewise difficult. A telepath might detect them on a deep scan. There is a 1-in-20 chance of anyone performing a deep scan on a multiple personality detecting this fact accidentally. If a deliberate search for multiple personalities is being made, a Telepathy check (DC 20) is required. If any of the personalities in the target is telepathic however, it will attempt to fool the searcher; treat it as a normal contest of telepathy except that if the multiple personality wins the scanner does not detect the existence of the condition at all and is unaware they were diverted or blocked.

Organ Transplants and Artificial Organs

By the 23rd century, organ transplant technology is extremely advanced; the main risk from a failing organ is keeping the patient alive long enough to perform the complex surgery required, as well as the difficulty of obtaining a suitable 'spare part'. On most racial homeworlds or long-established colony worlds, any decent hospital will maintain a freezer full of stored or artificial organs. Onboard starships, on lesser colony worlds or on space stations, it may be more difficult.

There are three classes of artificial organ:

Cloned Tissue: This is the best possible type of replacement part, but it requires that steps be taken well in advance of any actual injury. A cloned organ is built from the actual cells of the recipient, so there is almost no possibility of rejection. Growing a cloned organ takes $6 + 1d4$ months. Once grown, it can be stored in a freezer indefinitely. The cost of such an organ is 5,000 credits, plus 250 credits/year for storage expenses. If such organs are purchased, their location must



be specified – no one carries spare hearts with them in a suitcase and a cloned heart stored on Centauri Prime will not do the owner any good if he has been critically injured on Janos-7.

Donated Organs: Many species will create organ banks of donated body parts. In the case of some species, such as the Drazi or Centauri, body parts are often harvested as punishment for crimes. In others, the donation is an act of charity. Minbari often arrange for organs to be donated, but doing so involves a great deal of ritual and it is seen as creating a bond between the donor and the recipient, one which may extend to family, clan and caste relationships.

It is often a matter of pure chance if a donated organ is available. The base chance is 75% if the patient is on a racial homeworld or major colony world, 50% if on a minor colony world and 10% if the patient is on an alien world or on a space station (even then, only if the station has a very well stocked MedLab – small outposts and the like will not have organ banks).

Humans and Minbari do not charge for organs drawn from organ banks; most other races do and the cost will usually be 2d4 thousand credits.

Donated organs may be rejected. The recipient must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) once a day for a week in order to fully accept the organ. If the recipient is under the care of a doctor (as seems likely) the doctor may make a Medical check (DC 20) to counteract any failed Fortitude save. Very advanced medical technology (Centauri or Minbari level) adds a +2 to the save. If the source of the organ is a close relative, a further +2 is granted.

Gaim and Pak'ma'ra gain a +5 on such saves, due to their low levels of genetic variability within their species.

Artificial Organs: Cybernetics can be used to replace nature. All the major and league races, except for the Minbari, have experimented with a variety of artificial organs. Most of them have reached reasonable levels of functionality, but interfacing flesh and machine always imposes some difficulties. Artificial organs are never rejected, but are



often subtly inferior to flesh-and-blood. However, there is often a small degree of cross-species compatibility, as many species' hearts, lungs or livers work mostly the same way and furthermore, artificial organs require little special care to store and transport. This translates to a 90% chance of finding a suitable organ at any racial homeworld, with a 70% chance on a colony world and a 50% chance on a spaceship or starbase (presuming such has medical facilities). Military ships, in particular, will stock a good supply of 'spare parts'.

The recipient of an artificial organ suffers a –2 modifier to Constitution.

Regardless of the type of organ found, the surgery to implant one requires 2 + 1d4 days of post-op convalescence. Such surgery can only be performed in a well-equipped medical facility and requires a Medical check (DC 25). Assistants can help – for each assistant with at least 5 ranks in Medical, the main surgeon gains a +2 synergy bonus, up to a total of +6. Failure by less than 5 means the transplant failed but the patient is still alive; failure by 5 or more means the patient must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or die.

Artificial organs cost an average of 1d3+3 thousand credits.

When to use these rules

If a character is reduced to –5 hit points before stabilising, there is a 25% chance an organ was damaged beyond the body's ability to heal. The exact organ should be determined by the Games Master based on the circumstances of the injury.

CSI: Babylon 5

Dead bodies tell tales, as do char marks on walls and stains on floors. The technology of the Babylon 5 era is extremely advanced and can be used to extract a great deal of information from the most minuscule physical remnants. These machines can answer almost any question – but it takes a keen mind to know what questions to ask. Piecing together the events of a crime requires observation, deduction and knowledge.

New Skill: Technical (Forensics) (Int)

This skill is used to perform medicolegal analysis and interpret forensic data. The characters knows how to operate DNA sequencers, blood analysers, heat-trace recreators and so on. Anyone with 5 or more ranks in Medical gains a +2 synergy bonus to the use of this skill. Typical tasks, and their associated DCs, are:

Task	DC
Determine species	5
Extract DNA	5
Determine degree of relation based on two genetic samples (paternity testing, kinship and so on)	10
Determine time of death within 1d10 hours	15
Determine time of death within 1d10 minutes	20
Determine time of death within 1d10 seconds	25
Determine cause of death from complete body	10
Determine cause of death from incomplete (less than 50% remaining)	15

Investigation

A few of the things which skilled characters may be able to find out in the course of an investigation and the rules for doing so include:

Determine Species: Almost any biological residue – blood, skin or scales, sweat – can be used to identify the species of the being which left it. This requires access to a medical laboratory and 1d4 hours. This requires a Technical (Forensics) check as a DC of 5, if the sample contains DNA, or a DC of 10 if it does not.

Extract and analyse DNA: If DNA can be extracted, a nearly positive match to a single individual can be made. This will take one hour. This can provide proof that a specific person was present at a location. There are a few caveats however:

③ *Clones:* While the ‘Clone defence’ was ruled invalid in *EarthGov vs. Rorvik* (cert. 2170), cloning technology is known to exist, albeit illegally. Proof that a clone left behind DNA traces can be done by determining the degree of degradation of the genetic material due to age – a clone will always be younger, often decades younger, than its parent. This requires a Technical (Forensics) check (DC 20).

③ *Gaim and Pak'ma'ra:* Both of these species reproduce asexually, making individuals very similar to each other genetically. Determining legally acceptable levels of proof is very difficult – DC 25 for Pak'ma'ra and DC 30 for Gaim and takes 2d4 hours.

Decomposition: Organic material tends to decompose with time. After a day, the DC of all checks increases by 2, after a week by 4, after a month by 10, with an additional +1 for each month after that. Samples which are deliberately preserved suffer no such decay, of course. The penalty increases by 2 if the environment is exceptionally warm (>90 degrees) and is decreased by 2 (but never to less than 0) if the environment is cool (<40 degrees).

Distance and angle of shot: It is possible, by studying the burn patterns left by a PPG, to determine precisely how far away a shooter was from his target and where he was standing. This requires a Technical (Forensics) check (DC 15). Anyone with a Weapon Proficiency with a PPG and a BAB of +3 or more gains a +2 synergy bonus to this check. It is also possible to determine relative direction of motion (which way was the shooter moving, which way was the target moving). This has a DC of 18. It will normally take 1d4 minutes to determine these facts in a rough manner (good enough for continued investigation) but 3d10 minutes of detailed analysis using specialised measurements to get a determination admissible in EA courts.

Cause of death: It is often the case that the apparent cause of death was not the actual cause of death. Someone who was poisoned may be shot a few times with a PPG by the poisoner, in the hope no one will bother checking the corpse for toxins. Many suicides are disguised homicides, etc. If the cause of death was not deliberately faked, determining it is a simple Technical (Forensics) or Medical check (DC 10); if there was fakery involved, it becomes a contest of the killer's Medical skill against the investigators Technical (Forensics) or Medical skill. Determining cause of death takes at least 1d4 hours; more detailed examinations, such as culturing a fungal pathogen or a full toxicological scan including checks against alien databases can take up to 2d6 days. It is up to those conducting the investigation to decide how thorough they wish to be; ‘running a detailed

tox scan' can be a good excuse to hold on to a body when relatives are clamouring for it be returned.

Prestige Classes

Bodyguards

Those with power and fame have enemies. Even if they never intended anyone harm, there will always be those who resent their mere existence. Furthermore, many in power earn their opponents' wrath quite easily, even if they were only attempting to do good.

Bodyguards are a common means of dealing with this. While no bodyguard can provide absolute certainty of defence, they can reduce the threat from casual or opportunistic killers and sometimes thwart even the most determined assassin. While anyone with combat skills and the willingness to risk death for the sake of another can get work as a bodyguard, there are those few who truly specialise, who have devoted their lives to protecting others from harm.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Bodyguard, a character must fulfil the following criteria

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Skills: Concentrate 6 ranks, Intimidate 6 ranks

Feats: Harm's Way, Weapon Proficiency (any personal weapon)

Class Information

The following information pertains to the Bodyguard advanced class

Additional Hit Points: 2

Class Skills

The Bodyguard's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Concentration (Con), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Speak Language (none), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis)

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Bodyguard advanced class.

Improved Harm's Way

The character may take a 5-foot step to place himself adjacent to the person whom he is protecting with Harm's Way.

Combat Sense: This ability allows a Bodyguard of 2nd level or higher to designate a single opponent during his action and receive a +1 competence bonus on attacks against that opponent. The Bodyguard can select a new opponent on any action.

At 8th level, the competence bonus increases to +2.

Bonus Feats: At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Bodyguard gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Bodyguard must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it:

Contact, Improved Critical, Improved Initiative, Marksman, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Resist Scan, Sixth Sense, Weapon Focus, Weapon Proficiency (Any)

The Bodyguard

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Improved Harm's way
2 nd	+1	+2	+2	+0	Combat sense +1
3 rd	+2	+2	+2	+1	Bonus feat
4 th	+3	+2	+2	+1	Sudden action
5 th	+3	+3	+3	+1	Improved charge
6 th	+4	+3	+3	+2	Bonus feat
7 th	+5	+4	+4	+2	Defensive strike
8 th	+6	+4	+4	+2	Combat sense +2
9 th	+6	+4	+4	+3	Bonus feat
10 th	+7	+5	+5	+3	Blanket protection

Sudden Action: Once per day, a Bodyguard of 4th level or higher can focus his effort to burst into sudden action when the situation calls for it. The Bodyguard can change his place in the initiative order, moving higher in the count by a number less than or equal to his class level, as the Bodyguard sees fit. The Bodyguard can declare the use of this ability at the start of any round, before anyone else takes an action.

Improved Charge: A Bodyguard of 5th level or higher can make a charge without having to move in a straight line. All other charge rules apply, but the Bodyguard can alter his direction when making a charge to avoid obstacles.

Defensive Strike: At 7th level, if an opponent makes a melee attack against the Bodyguard and misses while the Bodyguard is using the total defence option, the Bodyguard can attack that opponent on his next turn (as an attack action) with a +4 bonus on his attack roll. The Bodyguard gains no bonus against an opponent who does not attack the Bodyguard or against an opponent who makes a successful attack.

Blanket Protection: At 10th level, a Bodyguard can use his expertise to provide protection for up to six allies (not including himself) within sight and voice range of his position. The Bodyguard takes a full-round action to issue orders and directions. Doing this provides the Bodyguard's allies with a +1 insight bonus to Defence for 2 rounds. The Bodyguard may do this a number of times equal to his Wisdom bonus, per day.

Media Star

The universe of Babylon 5 is a connected one. Nearly all civilised planets are enmeshed in a grid of lightspeed links, with uncounted terabytes of data pulsing around the world each second. The planets themselves are nodes in a galactic network of tachyon beams. There are thousands of channels of communication reaching between worlds, but the vast majority of attention is focused on an infinitesimally small percentage of those – some estimates are that 95% of the major races' citizens regularly read, view or listen to only 0.01% of all entertainment and news



sources. The individuals who manage to place themselves on those channels – as singers, commentators, newsreaders or salesmen – have tremendous influence and wield great, if unofficial, power. The sneer of a single Centauri art critic may doom an artist to obscurity, even if a thousand lesser-known critics adored him; if Rebo tells a joke, it will be repeated on Narn and Melat and Centauri Prime within a standard day.

The Media Star is one who has achieved that level of prominence. They are known almost everywhere in the galaxy. They are given special treatment and accorded honours for no readily definable reason; their fame seems to surround them with an aura of invulnerability. Docking regulations are waived, red tape is cut. Ambassadors will toss aside an appointment made six months previously in order to meet with them.

For many, fame is an addiction, worse than any other drug and they would rather be hated than ignored. Others see their fame as a tool to do good – to rally for a cause or to end an injustice.

The price is privacy. Everything they do, from their choice of wine to their current lover to their favourite episode of 'Drazi In The House' is public knowledge. Fame, like understanding, is a three-edged sword. Image is everything; as harmless a sin as excessive gambling can become a galactic scandal. Ex-lovers and former employees will enrich themselves by telling any secrets they can remember – or imagine. An adoring public can become a lynch mob in seconds.

This prestige class can also include celebrity athletes; to help better define them, use the following variant on the Perform skill:

Perform (Sport): This skill governs the ability to engage in formal physical games or competitions which have well-defined rules. The governing attribute can be either Strength (for sports such as weightlifting, discuss throwing or wrestling), Dexterity (for sports such as baseball, ice-skating or gymnastics) or Constitution (for sports such as long-distance running or swimming). While specific tasks in an extended simulation of a game might call for other skills checks (balance, tumble, swim), this skill measures overall ability to play a game according to its rules and conventions. A masterful street brawler may still fail to win a boxing match due to his lack of knowledge of the specific style of fighting called for. Synergy bonuses for high ranks in related skills (tumble and balance for gymnastics, for example) should be granted freely by the Games Master.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Media Star, a character must fulfil the following criteria

Skills: Perform 10 ranks, Diplomacy 5 ranks.

Feats: Skill Focus (Perform)

Class Information

The following information pertains to the Media Star advanced class

Additional Hit Points: 1

Class Skills

The Media Star's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Concentration

(Con), Disguise (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Speak Language (none), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis)

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Media Star advanced class.

Price of Fame: This is a 'negative' ability, in that it is likely to cause the character some trouble. Everywhere he goes, he can be identified. If he enters a room, all in the room automatically get a Spot Check at a DC of 20 $-1/2$ the character's level (*not* just class level!) to immediately notice him. This attention might be nothing more than the memory that 'Ooh, I saw Rebo at the same holocomplex I go to' or it might be more obnoxious, ranging from a request for autographs, to a challenge to a fight. Gather Information checks made to find out the characters whereabouts and activities gain a +4 bonus. Disguise checks made by the character suffer a -4 circumstance modifier unless the disguise is total – a human made up as a Narn, for example.

I'll Mention You To My Producer (or Coach, or Agent):

The Media Star can always find someone wanting to 'break in' to the business and can usually secure their aid for an implied, but never explicit, promise to help them somehow. A Gather Information check (DC 20) can give the Media Star the equivalent of a Contact for the next 24 hours. This ability can be used a number of times per week equal to the character's Charisma bonus. Note that abusing a contact's trust too blatantly will turn them against you.

The Media Star

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save*	Ref Save*	Will Save*	Special
1 st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Price of Fame, Undue Influence
2 nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	I'll Mention You To My Producer
3 rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Let's Put On A Show!
4 th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Too Famous To Kill, My People Are Coming
5 th	+2	+1	+1	+4	'No, I just look like him.'

*Characters whose fame comes from athletic or other more physical pursuits may swap the Will save for Fort or Ref, with the Games Masters permission.

Let's Put On A Show: A Media Star temporarily bereft of cash can usually find someone willing to pay them to do what they are famous for, often in circumstances which they would never accept, except out of desperation. An athlete stranded on Centauri Prime following a bad spat of gambling might agree to play on the side of a powerful Noble in an upcoming grudge match against a rival house. A news reporter might be convinced to give a lecture about the beauty of the free press to a group of students. Whatever the humiliating circumstances may be, they do produce a temporary influx of wealth – 1d6 x 1000 credits, usually enough to arrange a ticket home or secure needed supplies.

Undue Influence: People have an instinctive tendency to want to help celebrities, for reasons no one can articulate. The Media Star may add his class level to all Bluff, Diplomacy and Gather Information checks. Further, Non-Player Characters not actively hostile to the character have their base attitude shifted up one level unless there is some compelling reason for them to be unimpressed by fame.

Too Famous To Kill: Barring hired assassins and the like, most thugs are just smart enough to know that killing someone famous can bring even the most apathetic law enforcement down on their heads. In a potential combat situation, hostiles will avoid shooting at the media star unless he is shooting at them or unless they need to prevent him getting away. Otherwise, they will just attack his friends and let him run off.

My People Are Coming: Given any access to means of communication, a Media Star can usually assemble a crowd of fans. This will amount to 1d6 x Charisma bonus 1st level characters, mostly Workers, who will show up where the Star has told them to. This can be useful in terms of providing too many witnesses to a potentially criminal act, providing cover during a firefight or intimidating an enemy. This ability can be used once a week and cannot be used if the previous use resulted in a mass slaughter.

'No, I just look like him': The Media Star has learned to pass himself off as not being himself, at least some of the time. A Bluff check (DC 20) will enable him to ignore the 'Price of Fame' ability for the duration of a meeting, a meal, a trip to the theatre, etc.

Asteroid Flying

Even with space travel commonplace, the average sentient being still thinks of 'asteroid belts' as dense regions of space packed with tumbling rocks, when in reality most such belts are only hazardous due to high level of dust and

micrometeorites and even then only if travelling through them at exorbitant rates. There are however, a few areas where flukes of gravity have created regions akin to the belts of fiction – such as the one the *Maria* found. Orbital scrap yards, where the hulks of partially disassembled ships float aimlessly, also provide a similar environment. The following rules can be used for any atypically dense region of space. For rules about travelling through somewhat more realistic asteroid fields, see the *Babylon 5 Galactic Guide*.

Flying through such an area is very difficult, even in the most agile of craft. Nothing is static and the interplay of rocks careening off each other, makes navigation a matter of split-second reactions. If combat is taking place, things get even worse, as the force of weapons fire can split the rocks or change their path.

Each round, roll to determine the size of the hazard which must be avoided:

1d20 roll	Hazard
1-5	Clear flying!
6-10	Small
11-15	Tiny
16-17	Medium
18	Large
19	Huge
20	Gargantuan

If the hazard avoidance roll is made *exactly* then the character has dodged one rock only to risk flying right into another! Roll again.

Any ship which fails its avoidance roll and survives the impact may be flung directly into the path of another obstacle – roll once more on the table, but with a –5 modifier.

Regions of a belt may be especially dense or thin – the Games Master can apply a modifier from –5 to +3 on the hazard roll.

If combat is taking place, all Pilot rolls to avoid hazards are at –2 and the hazard roll is at +2.

Hazard avoidance and collision rules can be found in the *Babylon 5 Roleplaying Game and Fact Book*.

Welcome to the Hotel Kh'ali Phor'Nya

Trade is a vital part of interstellar relations, and with trade comes visitors, and with visitors come... hotels. All of the major races (aside, of course, from the Vorlons) and most of the League races maintain at least one place on their homeworld which is intended to provide comfortable accommodation for aliens. Some species, such as the Centauri, encourage tourism, with hotels set up for alien comfort located on many colony worlds, especially the luxurious ones. Others, such as the Gaim, barely endure the presence of aliens and have only those facilities necessary for survival.

Even well intentioned hosts can make mistakes, of course. Small differences in acceptable food, temperature tolerances, preferred humidity and so on, can make a stay intolerable. Cultural attitudes towards privacy, nudity, ambient noise and light, and appropriate times for work and sleep can likewise wreak havoc with guests. It is also often the case that one or two hotels may provide the only alien-friendly environments on a planet; in such a case, any but the most non-commercial of species can be expected to jack prices up to exorbitant levels. Prejudice may also play a part – a Pak'ma'ra is likely to find a 'cleaning fee' tacked onto its bill, especially if, as seems likely, it brought along its own food.

Despite these potential drawbacks, business is often brisk and at centres of travel and commerce, such as Centauri Prime, Zhabar, Sol 3 and Brakos, the cluster of alien-friendly hotels and the long-term expatriate dwellings can form a cosmopolitan setting, akin in many ways to Babylon 5 itself.

Poor hotel rooms cost 20 credits a night. For this the character receives exclusive use of a secured sleeping tube for a 10-hour period. This sleeping tube has a vibe shower built into it along with a locking door and a small-secured storage area. The tube measures 3 ft. by 3ft. by 8 ft.

A poor hotel generally stacks sleeping tubes two deep and ten across along a corridor wall. Most have two to five corridors connected to a central 'hotel lobby'.

Adequate hotel rooms are small rooms, no more than 100 to 150 square feet. They will contain a bed, one or two pieces of furniture and a simple comm unit.

Excellent hotel rooms are larger, 200 to 300 square feet, containing decently tasteful furnishings. The room contains enough snacks to make a single meal along with a number of luxury items.

Exceptional hotel rooms are small suites with two or more rooms, containing a wide array of amenities. The hotel staff provides various services for the guests, including contracting tour guides. Luxury services are available for an additional charge.

Imperial hotel rooms are at suites of at least 400 square feet (often more), containing the best luxuries money can buy. These quarters keep the guest in luxury sufficient for kings or despots.

Hotel rooms cost the following amounts per night:

Quality Level	Cost per night (Natives)	Cost Per Night (Biologically Compatible Non-Native)	Cost Per Night (Life Support Required)
Poor	20 cr.	30 cr.	N/A
Adequate	100 cr.	125 cr.	1,000 cr.
Excellent	200 cr.	300 cr.	2,000 cr.
Exceptional	400 cr.	600 cr.	4,000 cr.
Imperial	4,000 cr.	8,000 cr.	N/A

Biologically Compatible Non-Natives refers to aliens who can breathe the air, eat the food, etc, though they may need some slight special considerations such as humidifiers, air filters or restricted diets. Even if no such physical differences exist, the cultural and legal hassles associated with playing host to offworlders mandates the higher price.

Life Support Required refers to species that need a sealed room or a special environment. Thrakallans and Vorlons are typical examples.

Keepers

Keepers are symbiotes that grow to maturity on Drakh hosts. It takes considerable time and effort to grow a Keeper, which is why they are used sparingly and why the Drakh prefer to control populations indirectly. A given Drakh can produce a keeper only once every two years and a keeper, once bound to one host, cannot choose another.

The most obvious part of the 'keeper' manifests as a tentacled creature sitting on the host creature's shoulder. It has grey/green skin and a single eye with a golden iris and slit pupil. The tentacles wrap around the host's shoulder and neck. It can hide itself by blending, giving it Hide +12 for the purpose of avoiding being spotted by an observer. Once spotted it has a DV equal to the host's +4 and 4 hit points.

The obvious part of a keeper represents only a small portion of its total body. The creature's micro-fibres extend though out the host's body, penetrating his nervous system and organs on a wide variety of levels. It places a redundant set of its own organs down among the hosts own, allowing it to survive the destruction of its outward form with only minimal difficulty. If the outer aspect is harmed it can regenerate itself in the space of an hour.

In order to take control of their host, a keeper may either inflict pain or simply directly take over. When it exerts pain it inflicts 1 point of temporary Constitution damage per round on the host. When it attempts to directly take over the target may make a Will save (DC 10 + 1 for every month that the keeper has lived on the host) to resist. The keeper may use any of the host's skills at a -4 penalty while it is in control.

A keeper exerts control over the host's actions, not his thoughts. In the words of one host 'It does not care why I do what I do, so long as I do it.' The keeper does not, as a general rule, rummage though the host's mind looking for reasons. It is a simpleminded creature in many respects; so long as it gets what its masters want it leaves the host in peace.

Keepers live in intimate contact with their host, but lack the resources to deal with the more exotic substances that

intelligent life routinely ingests. A keeper automatically fails any Fortitude save to resist the effects of a drug or alcohol.

Sensing the Keeper

Deleenn almost saw the keeper on Londo's shoulder. This may be due to her unique heritage, or perhaps it was something of the same force which allowed her to sense the darkness which surrounded Mr Morden (way back in 'Signs & Portents', season 1). It also seems to be related to the keeper exerting its will on Londo – doing so may have prevented it from keeping itself invisible.

Any Minbari with the blood of Valen has a chance to sense those touched by Shadows, as they carry within them a tiny portion of Valen's Vorlon-altered DNA. If a keeper is actively controlling someone whom a Valen-blooded Minbari is watching, the Minbari may make a Spot check (DC 20) to see a vague, shadowy, *something* on the infected person. If they know what a keeper is, they will recognise it instantly; if they do not, they may dismiss what they have seen as a trick of the light or a momentary illusion. If a keeper knows it has been spotted, it will take the steps necessary to preserve its secret, including having its host kill the witness if it is convenient.

Cults of Personality

Several characters in the Babylon 5 saga have become cultish figures – Sheridan, who died and was reborn; Byron, who martyred himself but whose memories literally live on in a hundred followers; G'Kar, who twice walked into the pits of Centauri Prime and twice walked out again, each time with new wisdom. It is worth noting none of these



characters were cunning manipulators or con artists who sought followers; at most, they sought people to follow their *ideals*, not themselves. Nonetheless, it is far easier to worship a person than to live for an idea, much simpler to hold onto an idol than to let go of your own hatred and prejudice.

A character who develops a cult following gains followers, even if he does not want them. He is free to ignore them or he may take it upon himself to teach them or even exploit them, depending on his preferences.

Whether or not a character begins to attract a cult following depends on his actions and the Games Masters discretion. In order to gain the sort of devotion required, the character must have done something (or at least be *reputed* to have done something) truly exceptional, something few or no beings have done before. Some examples are:

- ⑤ Come back from the dead
- ⑤ Go to Vorlon space and return
- ⑤ Demonstrate psionic abilities of P13 or higher
- ⑤ Be seen in the company of First Ones, who actively support the character
- ⑤ Survive some cataclysm or disaster that no one could survive
- ⑤ Escape from someplace inescapable
- ⑤ Present a philosophy, creed or vision so compelling that it has to have been inspired by a 'higher power'
- ⑤ Fulfil a well-known prophecy

In addition, the character must be at least 6th level.

If these, or similar, events occur, a character may begin to attract followers. Followers come in two forms: Aides and Acolytes. An Aide is a high level individual who has sworn devotion to the character; Acolytes are the masses of followers. The total is determined by the character's Leadership score, which is equal to their character level + charisma bonus + a value determined by the Games Master which represents their degree of fame or notoriety.

An Aide may never be more than two levels below the character's level.

A character with followers may order them to do anything, within reason. They are *devoted*, not mind controlled. They do suffer a -2 on all contests of Bluff, Diplomacy or Sense Motive against their mentor, but beyond that, they are not helpless. Of course, the degree of dedication can vary. Humans have killed themselves on the command of a cult leader, after all.

Leadership Score	Aide Level	Number of Acolytes by Level					
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
1 or lower	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	1 st	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	2 nd	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	3 rd	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	3 rd	—	—	—	—	—	—
6	4 th	—	—	—	—	—	—
7	5 th	—	—	—	—	—	—
8	5 th	—	—	—	—	—	—
9	6 th	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	7 th	5	—	—	—	—	—
11	7 th	6	—	—	—	—	—
12	8 th	8	—	—	—	—	—
13	9 th	10	1	—	—	—	—
14	10 th	15	1	—	—	—	—
15	10 th	20	2	1	—	—	—
16	11 th	25	2	1	—	—	—
17	12 th	30	3	1	1	—	—
18	12 th	35	3	1	1	—	—
19	13 th	40	4	2	1	1	—
20	14 th	50	5	3	2	1	—
21	15 th	60	6	3	2	1	1
22	15 th	75	7	4	2	2	1
23	16 th	90	9	5	3	2	1
24	17 th	110	11	6	3	2	1
25 or higher	17 th	135	13	7	4	2	2

Equipment & Vehicles

Spacecraft

Brakiri Ayl-Wutai Liner

Colossal V Spacecraft; hp 1,300; DV 5 (–16 size, +7 agility); DR 10; Spd –; Acc 2; Dec 2; Han +1; Sensor +1; Stealth 12; SQ Artificial Gravity; Cargo 275,000 lb. + 6 cargo pods; 3 Officers, 4 Pilots, 4 Sensor Operators, 15 Crewmen, 512 passengers

Weapons:

Two Graviton Pulsars; Front/Left, Front/Right; Attack +2 (targeting computer); Damage 15+1d10; Critical 20/x2; Range 2; Rapid Fire

Craft (2):

6 Shuttles

The Ayl-Wutai is typical of Brakiri passenger liners, with a mix of luxurious cabins for the rich and cramped sleeping tubes for the poor. The ship is rigidly segregated by ticket class and presence in the wrong part of the ship without an invitation is cause for severe fines. The ships carry only minimal armament to deter raiders and are fairly helpless if attacked by any true military craft.

Enphilli Raider

Large Spacecraft; hp 22; DV 13 (–1 size, +4 agility); DR 6; Spd 35; Acc 10; Dec 4; Han +5; Sensor +2; Stealth 15; SQ Atmospheric Capable; Cargo 8 lb.; 1 Pilot

Weapons:

Twin-linked Light Particle Cutter; Boresight; Attack +1 (Targeting computer); Damage 2d10; Critical 20; Range 1

This is a standard Delta-V fighter, enhanced by Drazi technology. Raiders plundering the minor worlds near Drazi space regularly purchase such equipment,

getting it cheaply and quietly in return for providing the Drazi with a share of the loot, as well as keeping down any of the local sentients who might be getting 'uppity'. Such ships are often a surprise for those who expect only bog-standard Delta-Vees.

Such ships, being fusions of out-of-date Earth tech and cutting-edge Drazi tech, are hellish to maintain – all maintenance costs are increased by 50% and all Technical (Electronics) checks made on the craft suffer a –2 equipment modifier.

Long Range Survey Ship

Colossal spacecraft; hp 75; DV 8 (–8 size, +6 agility); DR 10; Spd –; Acc 3; Dec 2; Han +2; Sensor +12; Stealth 10; Cargo 5,000 lbs.; 1 pilot, 2 passengers; SQ: Long-ranged, Jump Point

Craft: 1 shuttle

These small (for what they do) and expensive craft represent a pinnacle of technology. Only a few races are capable of producing ships capable of this sort of independent exploration, among them the Minbari, Centauri and Brakiri (who do so using *borrowed* technological prowess). The ship which G'Kar purchased was of Brakiri manufacture. The small crew requirements are due to extensive automation and pseudo-AI systems. The bulk of the ship consists of engines, power and supplies – living quarters are cramped and spartan. The sensor suite contains many specialised scanners designed to interpret planetary data, from atmospheric composition to hazardous micro-organisms.



'Redhelm'

Fighter

Huge Spacecraft; hp 32; DV 16 (-2 size, +8 agility); DR 7; Spd 45; Acc 10; Dec 6; Han +6; Sensor +2; Stealth 16; SQ Afterburners, Atmosphere Capable; Cargo 15 lb.; 1 Pilot

Weapons:

Twin-linked Anti-Muon Cannon; Boresight; Attack +4 (targeting computer); Damage 4d8; Critical 19-20; Range 1 Plasmatic Bolt; Turret; Attack +3 (targeting computer); Damage 2d8+2; Critical 19-20; Range 2; Rapid Fire



These fighter craft were flown by the unidentified aliens who attacked the station early in 2262. For want of a better name, the species has become unofficially known as the Redhelm after their distinctive encounter suits. Their technology is alien, but not noticeably superior to top-of-the-line Earth craft.

Va'Nial Fast Fighter

Large spacecraft; hp 23; DV 20 (-1 size, +11 Agility); DR 6; Spd 60; Acc 14; Dec 14; Han +10; Sensor +10; Stealth 40; SQ Atmospheric capable, Minbari flight computer; Cargo 5 lbs.; 1 pilot

Weapons:

Dual light fusion cannon; Boresight; Attack +6 (targeting computer) Damage 3d8; Critical 18-20; Range 1

Introduced on some of the newest White Stars as a variant on the Nial, the Va'Nial is all about speed, speed, speed – getting in, shooting and getting back out. The ships have very little life support and are designed for quick strike missions only, not scouting or long patrols. Many of the warrior caste dislike them, preferring the traditional Nial, but human Rangers and trainees often relish the incredible speed and manoeuvrability of these craft.

Equipment

Survival Bubble

When folded, a survival bubble is a block of clear plastic about 1 foot by 1 foot by 3 inches, affixed to a rectangular block of machinery about 6 inches by 6 inches by 1 inch, weighing 10 pounds. When in use, it is a bubble 8 feet in diameter, capable of holding one person comfortably and two at a pinch.

To use a survival bubble, it must be shaken out, revealing something akin to a large garbage bag. The user steps inside and seals it. Once sealed, it is activated and becomes filled with air from the attached tanks. It is also heated to a comfortable temperature. A short-range homing beacon is also activated. A survival bubble is not a lifepod, and is designed primarily to keep people alive *inside* a damaged ship – for example, the crew of a free trader might use them if a cargo container they are working inside has been breached. However, in an emergency, it will sustain life outside of a ship.

The survival bubble has no food or water and only limited air recycling. It can keep one occupant alive for 12 hours, or two alive for 5. Centauri bubbles will sustain life for 18 hours and weigh only 6 pounds; Minbari bubbles will work for 24 hours and weigh 4 pounds.

Survival bubbles cannot be reused. A bubble has a DR of 6 and 5 hit points.

Biotech

Control Pods

A single pod can replace up to 25 crewman. If a pod, or set of pods, is acting alone, the ship is considered to be crewed by individuals with a total bonus of +5 to all relevant skills. However, if there is any kind of guiding sentence (usually a Drakh communicating by tachyon beam) the bonus increases to +10.

Installing a control pod is difficult for non-Drakh, as the technology is very alien to that of most races. A Technical (Electronics) check (DC 25) is needed to interface the pod. Failure by more than 5 indicates that the pod is destroyed and that the ship has taken Heavy damage to its control systems. The installation will take 2d4 days, but the success or failure will not be determined until the end of that time period.

A telepath who has the Surface Scan ability can help to adjust the pod, though this is not something most will do willingly. If the telepath scans the pod while the technician is working on it, he can grant a +2 synergy bonus to the Technical (Electronics) check. However, the telepath will suffer 1d4 points of temporary Wisdom damage from doing so.

The Book of G'Kar

Even in its unfinished and unedited state, the Book of G'Kar is a masterpiece of philosophy. It is inspiring and enlightening to beings of most races, but it was written by a Narn for other Narn and it is they who will get the most use out of it. A large portion of the book focuses on dealing with other races – something Narn generally have a great deal of difficulty doing. Any Narn character that truly studies the book may gain some practical, as well as spiritual, benefits but doing so requires more than a casual skimming while waiting for the shuttle.

If a Narn studies the Book of G'Kar for 16 weeks, and makes a Will save (DC 12) each week (reflecting actually concentrating on the book, pondering its lessons, and so on), he may choose one of the following skills: Bluff,



Diplomacy or Sense Motive. He will gain a +2 on all checks using that skill when dealing with non-Narn.

If a Will save is failed by less than 5, it indicates the character was unable to study intently during the week, but the character may continue until a total of 16 successful checks have been made. If the save fails by 5 or more, the character finds G'Kar's philosophy disagreeable, incomprehensible or simply cannot discipline himself well enough to truly internalise the lessons taught. He cannot gain any mechanical bonus from the Book, though he may of course continue to try to roleplay his studies.

The 'Narn Edition' of the Book of G'Kar costs 25 credits, weighs 4 pounds and, despite G'Kar's wishes, is readily available for purchase. No Narn would purchase or read anything other than the authentic version (complete with the Brown Circle of Enlightenment on page 83), but non-Narn will often wish for translated or electronic versions, which can be found within a month of the Narn publication for 5 credits or so.

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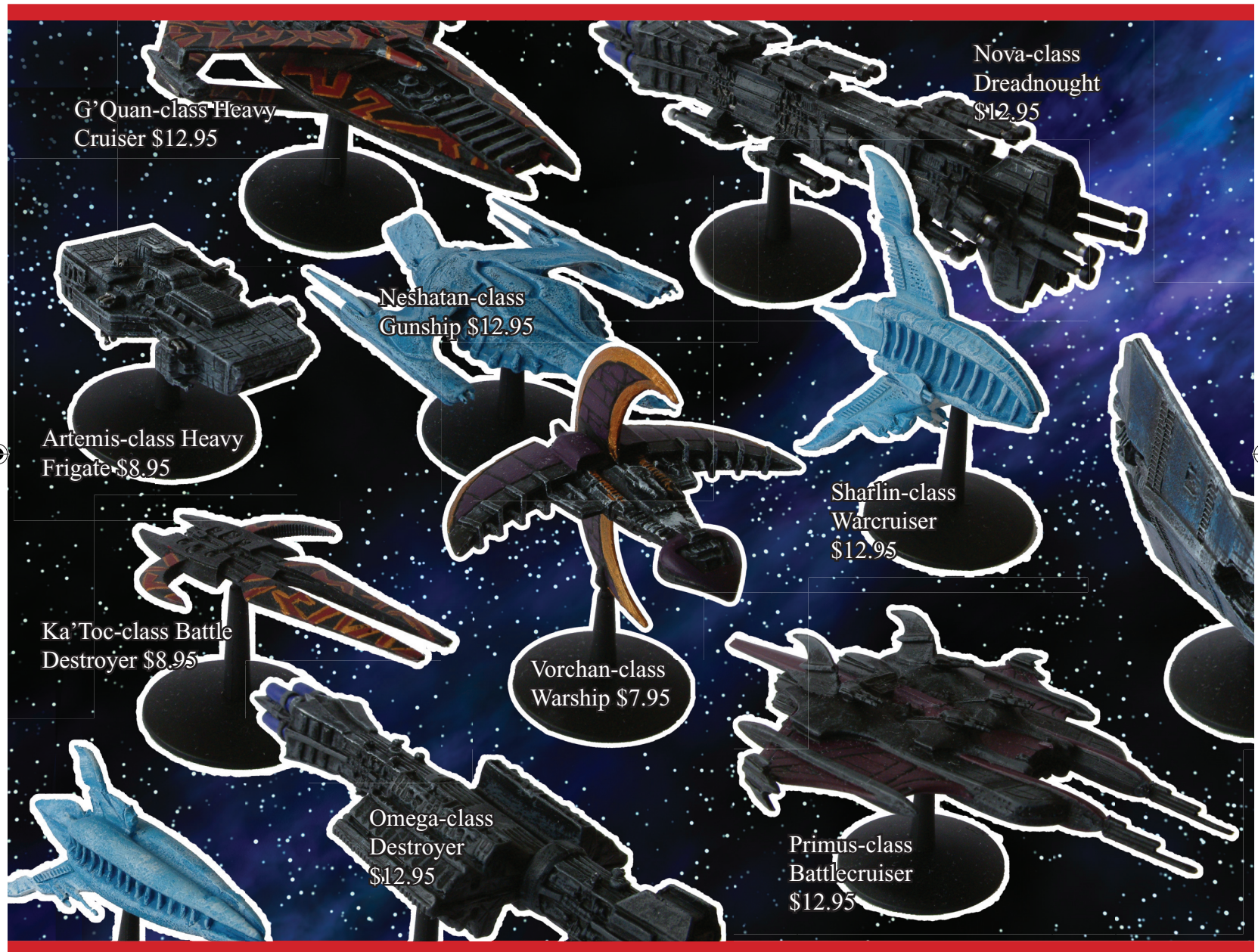


**‘There were times... I thought none of us
would get out alive.**

**Some of us didn’t. But, we did everything we
said we were gonna do and nobody can take
that away from us, or this place.’**

Zack

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