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THESE STARS ARE OURS!

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THESE STARS ARE OURS!

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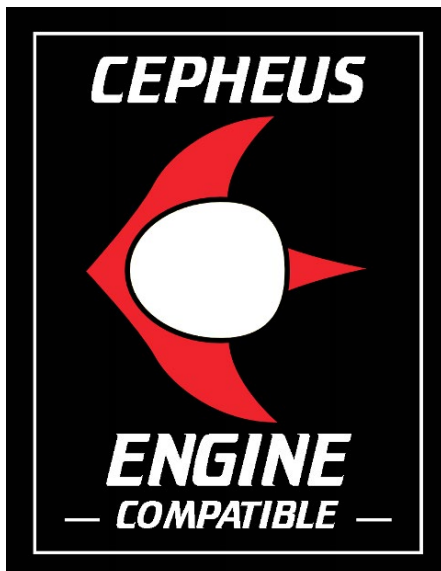
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Introduction

“We are human. Terra is our cradle, our motherworld. However, for a century and a half we were not its rulers, nor did we have control over our destiny. The Reticulan Empire ruled us as it ruled countless billions of sentient beings from other species. Our destiny was in shackles. The Empire is a prison for sentient species. Our destiny is to break free of these shackles, to tear down the walls of this prison. For decades, we fought for alien overlords in bloody wars far to Rimward. We returned to our motherworld to see our people humiliated, oppressed, and robbed. It is time we stop fighting for the Reticulans. It is high time we start fighting for ourselves. For the first rays of the Terran Dawn do shine upon us, and soon enough the sun of our freedom – of the freedom of all sentient beings in known space – will rise to drive back the darkness of our Imperial conquerors. As Terrans – we must rise against our oppressors, free our motherworld, and in doing so – liberate all known species from the Imperial yoke.”

- Vera Singh, **Terran Dawn**, 2227 - Introduction

These Stars Are Ours (TSAO) is the first product of the Visions of Empire (VoE) line of space-opera setting material for the Cepheus Engine Core Rules. Set in 2260 AD, it introduces the player characters to the immediate aftermath of the Terran Liberation War against the mighty Reticulan Empire and its many thralls. The Reticulan Empire was forced to sign a humiliating peace treaty with the victorious Terrans and reluctantly accept Terran independence from the Empire. For their part, the upstart Terrans, bolstered by their victory against their old masters, now move to become a power to be reckoned within interstellar affairs. On this background of espionage, maneuvering, and saber-rattling, and on the new interstellar frontiers, the player characters can forge a destiny of heroes or villains of the new United Terran Republic. This book provides background information, a 16 by 10 hex star-map, full information and write-ups about all 64 major worlds in this area, and other materials necessary to set a Sci-Fi campaign in the exciting times of the 23rd century.

It is two years after we won the War against our old Reticulan masters. We - the children of Mother Terra - are now free to forge our destiny and put our mark on the stars. These stars are ours! We took them by our right, and by the blood of our brave soldiers and star-sailors who gave their lives to free our Motherworld from the Reticulan yoke. The United Terran Republic proudly carries our Terran banner forward and we will make ourselves - humans from Terra - into a power to be reckoned with. This is a time for bold men and women to step up and leave their mark on the universe. We need intrepid explorers to discover the riches of our far frontiers; enterprising merchants to open up new trade routes with far-away alien stars; cunning spies and agents to protect us from any alien plot against our hard-won independence; and of course - daring soldiers and spacers to protect our borders and push back those who still desire to enslave us.

But we are not alone - brave Cicek warriors and even Reticulan and Ssesslessian defectors fought at our side against the Reticulan legions. Rebuilding our space - indeed, building Terra into a mighty force on the interstellar playfield will require the help of these same alien allies. Against this mighty alliance, stand our many enemies - both internal and external. Corrupt politicians and crime-lords plot to turn our glorious Republic into their own plaything at our expense. Ruthless pirates and raiders rob far-flung colonies, heedless of the opening they give to our greater enemy. In the shadows, House Thiragin - the Reticulan noble house which once ruled Terra with an iron fist - plots and plans for its ultimate revenge on us upstart “barbarians”. For all of this - children of the Earth – Mother Terra needs you!

Required Materials

To use this supplement, you will need a copy of the Cepheus Engine System Reference Document, from Samardan Press™ available from DriveThruRPG.

Alternatively, you may use any other variant of the 2D6 Science Fiction SRD such as the base System Reference Document (SRD), itself freely and legally available at <http://www.travellersrd.com>.

Also, to get the most from this book you will need at least two six-sided dice and some pens/pencils and paper or a computer.

References to Other Books

- Cepheus Engine System Reference Document: *CE*

Die Roll Conventions

The Cepheus Engine uses only six-sided dice. For example, when rolling two dice and adding together the result, the rules will refer to “2D6”. Occasionally, smaller dice may be needed; the terms D3 and D2 are used. Whenever D3 is used, roll a six-sided die and use the following: 1-2: 1, 3-4: 2 and 5-6: 3. For a D2, roll a six-sided die and use the following: 1-3: 1, 4-6: 2.

D66: Various tables in this book. In this case, roll two six-sided dice, but do not add their results together; instead, consider one of them as the “tens” and the other as the “ones”, yielding a result ranging from 11 to 66 (11-16, 21-26, 31-36, 41-46, 51-56, and 61-66).

Dice Modifier (abbreviated to DM): A number to be applied to a die roll before it is used. Dice Modifiers are preceded by a sign, which indicates if the number is to be added to or subtracted from the roll. For example, a Dice Modifier of –2 indicates that two is to be subtracted from the roll; a Die Modifier of +4 indicates that four is to be added to the roll.

All other die rolls conventions and action resolution mechanics are as described in *CE 11* and *13-19*.

About the Authors

Omer Golan-Joel is a 34 years old freelance English-Hebrew-English translator and an avid sci-fi and fantasy gamer from the town of Yavne, Israel. He lives with his fiancée and two cats Saki and Chicha – the real masters of the house – as well as an entourage of lizards, from the gang of house geckos to the large Star Agama who graces the wall of his home in the warm and hot months. Omer is a fan of science-fiction, fantasy and history, an amateur cook, and a hobbyist herpetologist. He also writes sci-fi and fantasy role-playing gaming material, including **Outer Veil**, a full-scale campaign setting for the rules once known as Mongoose Traveller, which was published by *Spica Publishing*® in 2011. In early 2016, he joined forces with his old comrade-in-arms Richard Hazlewood to form *Stellagama Publishing*, an independent role-playing publishing house.

Richard Hazlewood has been playing RPGs since 1976. He served eight years in the US Navy, operating nuclear reactors on submarines. He enjoyed that so much he got out of the Navy and went into aviation. Richard has a Master’s Degree in Aerospace Engineering and works for a major US Airline. He has two grown children and three grandchildren. Richard lives with his wife and three dogs in the Southern USA.

Josh Peters is a high school math and history teacher, an accomplished drummer, and avid tabletop RPG gamer. Josh has a Master’s degree in history, and resides in Montreal, Canada, with his beautiful, patient wife and deviously adorable daughter.

Stellagama Publishing

Stellagama Publishing is a small, independent, international role-playing game publisher focused on science fiction gaming founded in January 2016. We publish gaming material for Cepheus Engine, 2d6 Sci-Fi OGL, Stars Without Number, and the White Star™ RPG based on Sword & Wizardry: White Box. Our interests are first and foremost to put forth enjoyable, immediately playable supplements, settings, and adventures for these games for the enjoyment of our fellow players and referees.

Book Overview

These Stars Are Ours is a fully independent setting for the Cepheus Engine rules. Here we are proud to present all the material you will need to play games, adventures, and campaigns in that universe. We present you with the universe of 2260 AD – two years after the decisive Terran victory over the Reticulan Empire, securing Terran independence and making humanity a young but rising interstellar power.

Chapter 1 – the United Terran Republic provides details of 2260's Terra, its history, current affairs and outlook, government and politics, military might, economy and corporations, technology, crime and law enforcement. The chapter also provides the enterprising Referee with details about the conquest and colonization of space, cultural life in 2260, as well as criminal and terrorist groups, and organizations to make the lives of player characters "interesting".

Chapter 2 – Aliens describes Terra's alien neighbors, allies, and rivals. Primary among these are the Reticulan Empire and Technate, the Cicek and their Confederation, the nomadic Zhuzzh and the enigmatic Ssesslessians. This chapter also describes minor alien species and alien empires – some of which are quite prominent – lying far from Sol and thus less influential on current affairs. We provide details about the biology, psychology and culture of each alien species, as well as advice about playing alien characters.

Chapter 3 – Characters and Careers deals with creating characters specifically intended for These Stars Are Ours. We offer character creation guidelines and careers for Terran and alien characters, including alien species-specific rules and full career tables. We also provide optional advanced character generation rules including event tables for all careers described in this book and rules for earning decorations while in service. This chapter also provides rules for cybernetic enhancements and related advanced technologies.

Chapter 4 – Starships contains two new small craft designs and five new starship designs unique to These Stars Are Ours. From the ubiquitous Reticulan Saucers and Terran military transports to Cicek raiders and Ssesslessian Infiltrators, this chapter allows the Referee and players to experience space travel and space combat in These Stars Are Ours. All starship descriptions contain full game stats, as well as detailed deckplans.

Chapter 5 – Terran Borderlands provides the Referee with a detailed overview of Terran space and its alien neighbors. Out of the entirety of Known Space in this setting – which spans multiple Sectors – this book focuses on the border region between Terran, Reticulan, Cicek and Ssesslessian space, as well as the Spinward Terran frontier which is open to exploration and colonization. This is an area brimming with political conflict, drama, and action, ideal for exciting science fiction campaigns. This chapter overviews and details the sixty-four worlds of the Terran Borderlands; worlds brimming with adventuring potential.

Chapter 6 – Patrons describes twelve Patrons from this setting willing to hire player characters and send them on thrilling adventures throughout the Terran Borderlands.

Appendix A – Terran News Agency Dispatches, February 2260 replicates an in-game news bulletin sheet, printable as a handout for players and containing multiple news stories – each one of them is also an adventure seed for your game.

Appendix B – Sources of Inspiration, Literary and Otherwise refers to multiple works of science fiction which have inspired the design of These Stars Are Ours – and which can provide inspiration for your game as well. It lists works of literature, cinema and television as well as the most recent and most modern medium – video games.

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Setting Overview

The Stars Are Ours! takes place in 2260 AD, two years after the Terran-Cicek victory in the Terran Liberation War against the mighty Reticulan Empire. This is a time of uneasy peace, when all sides of the previous war, as well as the newly-established polities and client-states on the border, plot their next moves and vie for political, military, and economic power. For the Referee and players, this is a time brimming with conflict, drama, and opportunity for bold player characters to make a name for themselves – and maybe change the course of history.

The Terran Liberation War – called the Terran Rebellion by the Reticulans – colors and shades every aspect of this setting. Many of the worlds in the Terran Borderlands were battlegrounds of the war, and the remains of countless battles litter their surfaces and low orbits. The war affected the life of almost every Terran who lived through it. Most human characters in the game who take military careers – actually fought in the War, and in many cases were demobilized recently with the transition to a peacetime military. For Reticulans who support the Technocratic Movement, this was a war of liberation from outdated Imperial rule, but for Imperial Reticulans this war was a shameful disaster, where the upstart Terran barbarians, instead of adhering to their rational place in interstellar affairs, had the audacity to challenge the Empire – and the impudence to win. A few Reticulans even plot revenge – especially House Thiragin, which was dethroned by the Terrans.

Immensely old and vast beyond any Terran comparison, the Reticulans rule over more than a Sector of space, from the Terran border to Coreward to the Chiwak contested territories in the far Rimward. The Imperial system is one of vertical and horizontal monopolies held by the nine Great Houses; each Great House controls most of the economic activity within its domain and the majority of the population in its territory is in its employ. The Empress rules over the Great Houses and is – in theory at least – the richest and most powerful individual in known space. The Reticulans also lord over a significant number of client and thrall species, providing them with resources and expeditionary troops for their Empire and Imperial military might. Both Terran and Cicek were once client species of the Reticulans, but have recently won their freedom. The Reticulans have been engaged – for centuries – in an intermittent war with the Chiwak, their eternal nemesis – and a bitter foe far better suited for combat than the delicate Reticulans. To combat them, the Reticulans employ warbots, as well as a vast number of auxiliary troops conscripted from the client species.

Terra and the space she carved out of the stars by force of arms is the new thorn in the side of the Reticulan Empire. Defeating House Thiragin – the wealthiest of the Great Houses – the Terrans established themselves as a force to be reckoned with. The Reticulans consider us, the Terrans, to be barbarian upstarts, but we answer them with guns. Now the guns are quite but remain pointed at the enemy. Ruling over Terran Space is the United Terran Republic (UTR), a strong, vigorous power administered by the pragmatic President Alberto Shen. Militarized to the hilt and highly centralized economically and politically during the war years, the UTR now moves to a more pluralistic economy with a vigorous private sector existing side by side with a strong public sector and a mighty military. Recently, following the War's end, the UTR demobilized a significant part of its military, though still retaining an impressive force. We - the Terrans - are a rising force in interstellar politics and are aggressively developing our economy, as well as pushing to colonize the wide-open frontiers of space.

The Terran victory created two new interstellar polities, which are in essence Terran client-states. The first is the Ssesslessian Harmony. Centuries ago, the Reticulans glassed the Ssesslessian homeworld, forcing them to become nomads and thralls of the Empire. Following victory, the UTR gave two former Reticulan worlds – Mehen and Jörmungandr – to the Ssesslessians as their new homeworlds; Ssesslessians have also colonized a few worlds to the Trailing. Highly spiritual but sectarian, the Ssesslessians maintain multiple mystery-cults to their numberless gods, all presided over by the Council of Harmony – and its Terran advisors. Second is the Reticulan Technate. During the War – and some would say even before the War - many Reticulans began to question the rationale behind the Imperial system and see it as an inefficient, imprudent apparatus. In its stead, they proposed Technocracy – meritocratic rule by experts and scientists rather than by hereditary nobles. This underground, and highly illegal, Technocratic Movement supported the Terrans during the War, and at War's end

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received their own polity, protected by Terran gunships – the Reticulan Technate. Rationally managed in both economy and politics, the Technate shows much vigor which is lacking, at least to a certain degree, in the old Empire.

To the Spinward-Rimward dwell the tribal, reptilian Cicek. Highly individualistic in the case of males and tribal community oriented in the case of females, the Cicek have a distaste for any political framework larger than a tribe of – at most – several thousand Cicek. Cicek males are highly competitive and driven to acquire Glory – the “social currency” of male Cicek society. As Glory changes quickly over time, so does the Cicek hierarchy – leaders rise and fall, and only a particularly Glorious male may hope to unite several tribes under his command. The latter happened recently when the warlord Nine Talons accumulated enough notoriety and Glory to unite a great number of Cicek tribes behind him. Nine Talons led his followers to break away from the Reticulans and support Terra in the war for liberation. With the help of several prominent females who organized the Cicek Democracy early in the War, he formed the Cicek Confederation combining multiple tribes into a very loose “government” concerned mostly with mail services and showing a (somewhat) united military force on the Reticulan border. But Cicek being Cicek, there is no guarantee that Nine Talon’s regime will last long, as his position is coveted by more or less every Cicek male in known space; one show of weakness or fall in Glory, and instead of one leader there will be several male Cicek vying for leadership. The only hope for stability is continued effort by Cicek females to preserve the Confederation despite the typical male competition.

There are other alien species in known space. First among them are the Zhuzzh. These insectoid aliens are opportunistic nomads, travelling space in their many starships – and even hollowed out asteroids called “worldships” – and trading in all sorts of artifacts, trinkets, and other goods. They are not above turning to piracy or smuggling when the opportunity arises, and not all of their goods are what they seem. Zhuzzh are said to originate from a world far to Rimward-Spinward, beyond Cicek space and next to Reticulan space, which was once a major Precursor world. The commonly held belief is that the Zhuzzh were – back then – semi-sentient scavengers who quickly filled the vacuum vacated by the Precursors’ fall. With the Precursors gone, the Zhuzzh quickly evolved sentience and learned how to use Precursor technology. This allowed them to advance very quickly in technology, though usually through jury-rigging and a magical approach to machinery rather than profound understanding of the principals of engineering behind their devices. Therefore, for example, their ships may contain a primitive fission reactor powering a highly advanced jump drive and wired to an electromechanical computer, all tinkered with and built from artifacts bought from other species or scavenged from derelicts and Precursor sites and strung with fetishes and talismans to keep it all working.

This is a time of great danger among the stars, as well as great opportunities. Enterprising people – both human and alien – can find employment in a wide variety of bold actions among the stars, from exploration of unknown worlds beyond the frontier, to diplomacy and espionage along the border, to trade and commerce between the far stars and across borders, to mercenary work in the many local and interstellar conflicts – or, indeed, active-duty military life in these interesting times. Adventure awaits!

Chapter 1 – the United Terran Republic

“When we rose up, threw off our chains, and overthrew the EFA collaborators, I was pessimistic about our chances. I thought that our people, with our few worlds and small fleets, could not stand against the Reticular might. I even feared that Terra would end up like the old Ssesslessian homeworld: reduced to rubble by the enemy. I was scared. But others knew one simple fact – that our spirit and determination were stronger than the Reticular generals and their mercenary troops.

These Terran patriots steadfastly believed in our indomitable defiance in the face of the Imperial oppressors, and they were right. Here we are, against all odds, against the well-calculated predictions of Reticular military planners – standing free, one year after our declaration of independence. Our Republic is the sum of Terran resilience – a state built on unity, on cooperation, on liberty. It is a Republic defended by its armed citizens – no longer slaves sent to die and kill on alien worlds for alien masters, no! We are free Terran women and men bearing arms and facing the same alien overlords on the battlefield, keeping their talons off our motherworld.

Today, these brave women and men are fighting in the trenches on Belobog, Sirius, and Svarog and flying starships in deep space in face of a relentless enemy. Wherever the Reticulans try to shackle our worlds, our citizens answer with gunfire. They fight for what is theirs: family, livelihood, liberty! Many of them will not return from the front lines. Many will give their lives for Mother Terra and our hard-won liberty. But this is the essence of our independence – won with blood, secured with fire. And we will march on, until we will raise our green and blue banner over the ruined palaces of the Reticular enemy – until we will secure our independence once and for all! And then the galaxy will know: These stars are ours!”

- President Vera Singh, June 3, 2233, **commemorating the first anniversary of Terran independence.**



Flag of the United Terran Republic

The United Terran Republic is the mightiest state in human history. A unified Terra now rules over multiple off-world colonies, and recently defeated the Reticular Empire, once thought to be invincible. This chapter describes the background of this human state, from which most player characters will probably hail, in all its glory: from its history, its politics, and its economy, to the criminal and terrorist groups who might serve as antagonists – or, indeed, patrons – for a party of adventurers.

History

For a century and a half, Terra was firmly held by Reticulan claws. Now, after the glorious and monstrously bloody Terran Liberation War, humanity enjoys new-found freedom and is an up-and-coming player in interstellar politics. What follows is a brief history of Terra and known local space since the Reticulan invasion of 2082 AD, up to the present day of February 2260.

2082-2190 Reticulan Conquest and the EFA

Humanity missed its chance to start its own interstellar state. Apart from a few privately-owned space tourist outfits and several abortive attempts at belt mining, we humans did not pay much attention to space. We preferred instead to focus on our day-to-day lives here on Earth during the hyper-consumerist 21st century. We cut back funding to our space programs. Even the single manned Mars landing in 2043 and the manned Ceres mission of 2055 were never followed by any further exploration. Then the Reticulans came.

In 2082, several Reticulan capital ships belonging to House Thiragin appeared in Earth orbit, sending a wave of smaller saucers to hover above Earth's major cities. The Reticulans were cunning: most Earth governments signed pacts with the alien visitors, lured by promises of advanced technology and vast wealth through interstellar trade. In a classical move, the Reticulans played a game of "divide and conquer" with the various Earth governments, pushing them towards the brink of global nuclear war, then offering themselves as humanity's saviours who prevented that war. In a matter of months, Earth was transformed from a chaotic collection of independent nation-states into a global client-state of the Reticulans, the Earth Federal Administration (EFA). Humans rebelled several times during the late 21st and early-mid 22nd centuries, only to be crushed by superior Reticulan firepower. These uncoordinated and badly organized revolts stood little chance to succeed, and factional (and national) divisions prevented the creation of a united force capable of maintaining long-term consistent resistance.

A few Earthlings did resist this bloodless economic and political takeover by forming the Terran Defense Committee (TDC), an umbrella group for a vast array of small guerrilla insurgency movements across the globe. For several years, its cells launched covert operations against the Reticulans and their EFA collaborators. By the late 2090s, however, the TDC – then already wracked by factionalist and divided along national lines - was hunted down and destroyed by the EFA's bio-augmented Federal Security Apparatus (FSA), better known as the "Men in Black".

While generally self-administered and permitted to field its own armed forces - mostly to serve as auxiliary troops for House Thiragin and as expeditionary forces in service of the Reticulan Empire - Terra was under the repressive rule of an alien-controlled client state. The Reticulans of house Thiragin brutally exploited the planet's economy and resources. Reticulan scientists used humans as lab-rats for various bio-technological experiments. Tens of millions of Terran soldiers were dispatched to fight distant wars on behalf of Earth's alien masters. The EFA permitted little freedoms to its citizens, but did settle nine major colonies and several minor ones, developing humanity's own sphere of space around Earth. Still, the EFA's main function was to facilitate the exporting of raw materials and some manufactured goods to the Thiragin monopoly and the larger Reticulan Empire with as little disruption from the native population as possible. Life on the Coreward frontier, however, promised far greater freedom than in the highly-regimented Extrasolar Colonies (or Earth itself – and many humans moved to the colonies, both legal and illegal, to escape the repressive life on Earth.

Until the mid-late 22nd century, the Reticulans enforced tight control over the technology provided to Earth, keeping them for the most part at TL9. The only exception was Jump-2 drives, sold by the Reticulans as "black box" devices to allow humans to colonize a larger number of stars. Not surprisingly, such an embargo created a burgeoning black market in smuggled alien technology. Various Cicek mercenaries employed by the Reticulans in Terran space found that selling technological contraband "on the side" was a wonderful way to supplement their income. Human smugglers plying the dangerous Reticulan border soon followed.

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2190-2232 Chiwak Wars, Returnees' Circles, and Resistance

For centuries, the Reticulan Empire has engaged in intermittent warfare with the Chiwak. Unlike the Reticulans who are physiologically and psychologically unsuited for combat, the Chiwak are born hunters with well-developed predatory instincts and the sharp claws to match. The Chiwak are as technologically advanced as the Reticulans, and competed with their neighbors for territory and resources. The Reticulan-Chiwak Wars flared up again in the late 22nd century, culminating in a massive Chiwak offensive on Reticulan border worlds. The Reticulans deployed forces better capable of countering the aggressive Chiwak. These included warbots, but more often these forces were comprised of alien auxiliaries, like humans.

One of the main Reticulan demands from conquered Terra was that the EFA would supply it with auxiliary forces, human troops to fight on the Chiwak front. Together with Cicek mercenaries, the Reticulans shipped these auxiliary armies many parsecs to the other side of their vast empire. The violence was brutal, as the Chiwak were – and still are – superb and vicious combatants. The number of dead and wounded humans quickly mounted. From the mighty armies sent forth in cryo-storage from Terra to the far Rimward, only a handful returned. Those Terrans who did make it home were forever scarred in body and psyche from the horrors of the Chiwak Wars.

Faced with a string of defeats on the Chiwak front, the Reticulans had little recourse but to arm the Terrans and hastily industrialize Terran worlds to TL12 standards for war production. They upgraded the EFA fleets, formerly a glorified police and counter-insurgency force, to a modern fighting force. Then they sent large parts of the fleets and army to fight on the Chiwak front, especially when the Chiwak broke through Reticulan lines in 2201 and rampaged through the soft core of Imperial space.

The veterans returned to Terra and saw their world under insidious alien yoke. Almost all of them suffered from lingering injuries and post-traumatic stress disorders. Veterans' support from the EFA was not forthcoming. In response, these veterans formed the Returnees' Circles – to help those who were having great difficulty re-adapting to life on Terra. Among these veterans, a former combat medic named Vera Singh rose to prominence in the 2220's and became the group's voice.

The EFA did not like this organization much, critical as it was of the way the government abandoned the veterans when they returned from the Chiwak Wars. By 2225 the Circles were outlawed and their offices closed by FSA agents. The network, however, had deep roots within the Terran populace. From this network rose the Resistance, formally named the Terran Coalition, which began a guerrilla war against the EFA regime and its Reticulan masters.

2232-2233 Terran Revolution

In 2232, after a century and a half of subjugation, massive waves of protests against the EFA's repression, unfair taxation practices, and continued conscription policy fanned the flames of Terran anger at the EFA. By then, the Resistance had developed a significant presence on most human worlds, and had made significant inroads into the EFA's conscript forces. It also found surprising allies among the Reticulan Technocratic dissidents. These underground Reticulan opponents of Imperial rule saw the Terrans as a means to uproot the Reticulan nobility and bring about a rational and meritocratic Technate. It was these Reticulan allies, as well as some of the "Hybrids" created by the Reticulans from Terran stock, that helped the Terran Resistance shield itself from Reticulan psychic spying, especially during the early days of the Revolution.

The Revolution began in autumn 2232. A thousand human children "disappeared" in the night of September 5th from the colony on Amaterasu. Their parents, who rightly suspected that the Reticulans had a hand in these abductions, demanded answers from the local EFA administrant offices the following morning. The human EFA clerks did not provide any information. After some heated discussion, the office's Reticulan advisor agreed to meet the parents. They demanded answers from her, and none were forthcoming. In the heat of the moment, one angry father grabbed a chair and smashed it into the alien's face. The Reticulan fell, her spine broken from the blow. The killing might have been accidental, but the EFA security forces reacted with a heavy hand. Most

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of the parents were killed in a grisly bloodbath. Only a handful escaped to the local Resistance cell. The news of this atrocity spread quickly: that night, tens-of-thousands of humans were out on the streets in open, but unorganized, revolt against the EFA. The Reticulan overseers on Amaterasu sent EFA security troops to crush the revolt. Most of these troops, however, joined the rebellion.

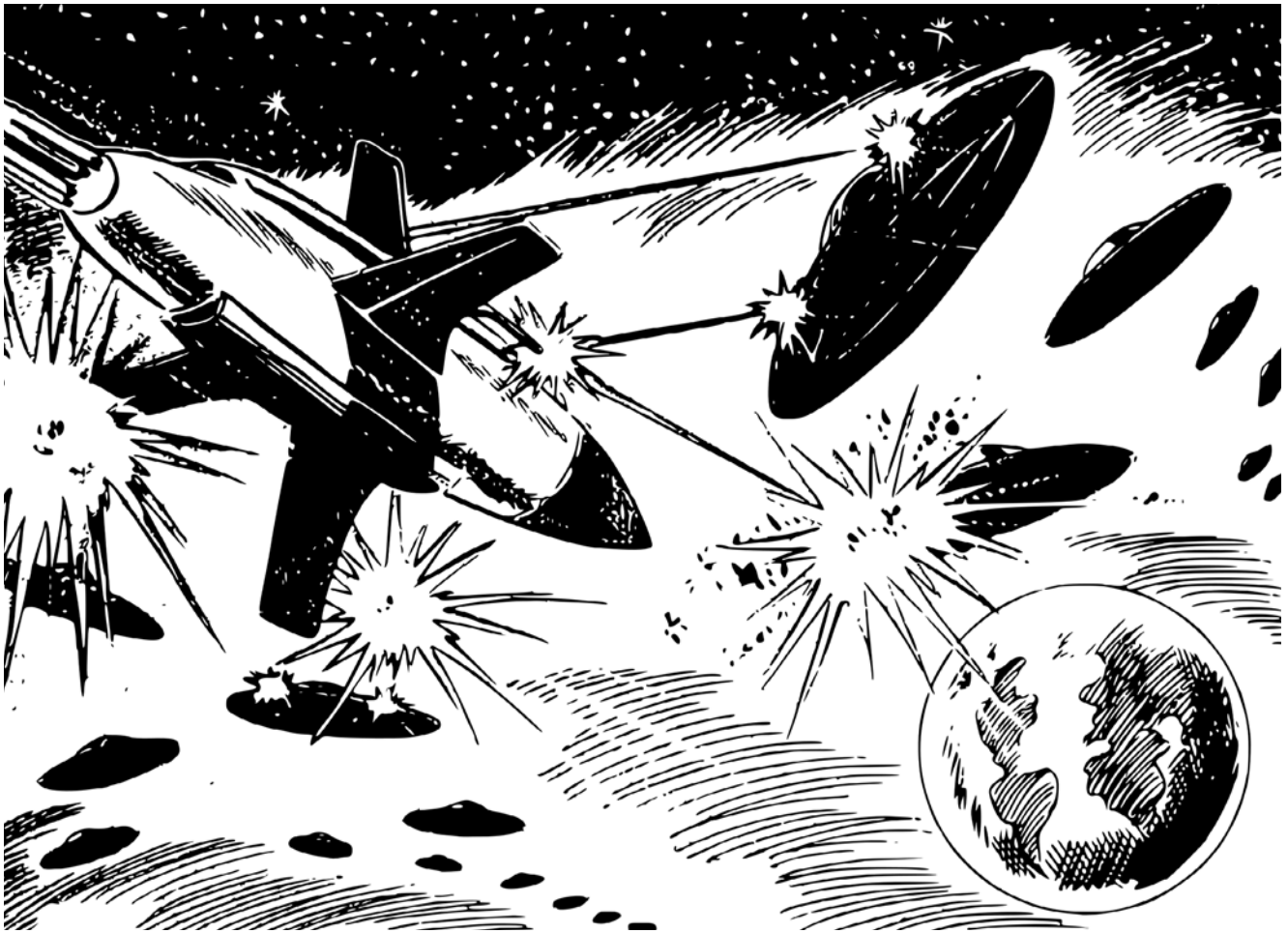
The revolt caught the Resistance command on Amaterasu by surprise. On the afternoon of September 8th 2232 they issued a general activation call to all Resistance cells and called upon EFA conscript forces on Amaterasu to mutiny. The unprepared Reticulans learned that the majority of EFA military and security forces in the Amaterasu system were quick to choose the Terran cause. The few who remained faithful to the EFA were quickly eliminated at the hands of rebels who had no mercy for collaborators.

The wildfire of rebellion spread to the rest of Terran space at the speed of jump. A fast courier seized by the rebels brought the news to Terra within a week, and open rebellion broke all across EFA space. By late December, the Terran Coalition was in almost complete control of all former EFA worlds. The Coalition proclaimed the establishment of the independent United Terran Republic (UTR) on December 21, 2232. Vera Singh became the new Republic's first President. The UTR then called for other aliens and client states suffering under the Reticulans to rise up in rebellion as well, and declared their goal of establishing a free Interstellar Republic.

The Reticulans responded by sending House Thiragin Huscarls, Cicek mercenaries, and many other alien auxiliaries, to crush the Terrans' impudent uprising. On February 2nd, 2233, a Reticulan punitive fleet arrived in Terran orbit after making the jump from Sirius. The Battle of Terra had begun. Hastily reorganized EFA expeditionary and garrison squadrons, bolstered by militarized civilian craft, fought against the heavy armament of the Reticulan armada. The Reticulans managed to land troops on Earth's surface, but the local population and the new Terran Army steadfastly held their ground. The Battle of Terra was brutal and destructive, and lasted well into the summer of 2233. The Terrans did manage to stymie the Reticulan assault, but their diplomatic efforts found more success when several Cicek tribes broke off from their Reticulan-dominated client-state and formed the Cicek Democracy, to later become the Cicek Confederation. Many Ssesslessians, who despised their Reticulan masters after they glassed the Ssesslessian homeworld centuries ago, were also glad to join the Terran war effort. The stubborn Terran resistance, combined with the prospect of mass mutiny among their own auxiliaries, forced House Thiragin fleets to withdraw in late August 2233. The UTR celebrated the first anniversary of the Terran Revolution knowing very well that the war had only begun.

The flames of war did force the Terran Coalition to compromise and absorb the major part of the old EFA collaborator administration into the new UTR government. The rebels were quick to put the high echelons of EFA government on trial for treason and execute them. However, they left most of the middle and low strata of government virtually unchanged, with the addition of new Terran Coalition officials to ensure that the bureaucracy's compliance with the new Terran government. This was an absolute necessity, as a thorough reorganization of government would have been detrimental to the war effort. Instead of upturning the system, the Terran Coalition gradually changed some of its personnel and replaced retired ex-EFA clerks with young Coalition apparatchiks.

Victims of the old administration, backed by hardline elements within the Terran government, repeatedly petitioned for a thorough purge of the new Terran government to uproot traitors and former collaborators, but the Singh administration refused such measures and patiently explained, repeatedly, that it was impossible to interfere that much in the function of government under fire. Blocked from exacting revenge on the hated collaborators through legal channels, many of the petitioners turned to private justice. At best, this meant exposing the identity and crimes of a former collaborator to ruin them socially and politically. At worst, this involved assassinations, kidnapping, and extrajudicial executions carried out by private citizens who were victimized by various collaborators during the EFA days. Officially, such acts were major felonies but in practice, many Terran Police – and sometimes even CRC officers - ignored such vigilantism.



2233-2258 – Terran Liberation War

With the Reticulans repulsed from the Sol system in 2233, Terra took the initiative and struck the Reticulan staging ground at Sirius with all the might it could muster. Sirius, however, was heavily fortified and defended by a large force of Reticulan House Thiragin huscarls and alien mercenaries. The initial assault won the Terrans control of several of the system's secondary mining worlds, but the Reticulan counter-attack pushed them off two of these rocks and left them defending the third. This led to six long years of indecisive and bloody battles in space and on the ground. It wasn't until 2239 that the UTR struck the killing blow against the Reticulan defenses and established Sirius as the main UTR staging area for attacks deeper into Reticulan space.

In an attempt to pin down the Terran fleets at Sirius, House Thiragin struck at the Terran industrial planet of Belobog in 2234. The initial Reticulan thrust won them a strong foothold on this key industrial world. With their primary fleets heavily engaged at Sirius, the Terran naval and Terran Guard presence at Belobog was skeletal at best. This led Thiragin planners to predict an easy conquest of Belobog that would cripple the nascent Terran war machine. However, they grossly underestimated the patriotism and fighting spirit of the local population. Militia units organized a hasty defense and launched a daring counter-offensive against the powerful Reticulan invasion force. At a monstrous cost in human lives, they slowed down the Reticulan advance on Belobog to a crawl. Further crippled by mutinies among their Cicek mercenaries and by Technocratic sabotage of their war effort, the Thiragin invaders were forced to fortify their positions in the dusty Belobog deserts. This meant that they had to delay their attack plans until the dust storms subsided, allowing the UTR time to move reinforcements to Belobog. It also allowed the defenders to move much of their industrial production to fortified underground facilities.

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At that time, the UTR could not abandon their primary offensive along the Sirius-Svarog front. Still, they sent as much of the Navy, Guard, and Army forces as could be spared to Belobog. This meant that during the early phases of the Battle of Belobog, the Militia and local Planetary Army endured the most of fighting. Things did not go well for the Terrans in 2236-2237, as the Reticulan “winter” offensive broke through the Terrans’ primary defensive lines and brought the war to Belobog’s industrial hubs. This led to three years of brutal house-to-house fighting in ruined cities. The entire population sacrificed dearly during this epic struggle. Factory workers were known to work 24-hour volunteer shifts to supply troops with desperately needed weapons and ammunition. Those too young or old to fight were often trained as medics and nurses, working in field hospitals hidden deep in city subway systems. Those populations who had not yet been directly exposed to the fighting sent a flood of volunteers into the Militia. Lightly-armed, poorly-trained Terrans fought desperately against Reticulan warbots, combat-walkers, and grav-saucers. The death toll on Belobog during those dark years was astonishingly high, even for bloody urban warfare; some reports saying over a hundred million Terrans died in the fighting. But the Terrans kept fighting stubbornly for their home.

The tide began to turn on Belobog in 2240. Once the Reticulan fleet was broken at Sirius, Terra sent the bulk of her forces to drive the Reticulans from Belobog. The Reticulans, however, did not buckle. This led to three more years of tough fighting in which Terra had the advantage, but had to face off against technologically-superior Reticulan mechanized forces. To liberate Belobog once and for all, the UTR and a large contingent of allied Cicek forces launched Operation Shiva in late 2242, striking at the House Thiragin holdouts on the embattled world with all the force they could muster. In March 2243, the remaining House Thiragin forces retreated from Belobog. This marked the end of a monumental and unimaginably costly Terran victory.

In 2242, when the Reticulans understood that the Battle for Belobog was going badly for them, they gambled on a flanking attack through the Solar Main – the Jump-1 string of stars ranging from Sasquatch to Barnard and beyond – and reaching Terra itself. As the Terrans concentrated their war effort on Sirius, Svarog and Belobog, their forces along the “backdoor” of the Solar Main were far thinner. The Reticulan attack struck from Asura at Manana, Hanuman, and Jambavan, eventually reaching Penghou in an attempt to strike at the Terran Core itself. This part of the war is now known as the “Dark War”, as both sides employed monstrous weapons of mass destruction against civilian populations at an extent unseen on the Trailing front. A Terran counter-offensive in early 2243 repulsed the invaders, but not before the Reticulan fleets inflicted terrible damage upon the colonies of Hanuman and Penghou, rendering them uninhabitable. In reprisal, when the Terran counter-attack reached Asura, the Terrans bombed the once-fertile Reticulan colony with heavy nuclear weapons and caused irreparable damage to its ecosystem, infrastructure, and population.

Once the UTR broke the Thiragin fleet on Belobog, its war effort gained great momentum. The UTR launched the Great Offensive of 2244 by invading Procyon, Oninaba, and Mehen simultaneously. With over a decade of rapid military industrialization and morale at an all-time high, the Terrans had a significant edge against battered House Thiragin. When the Terran fleets jumped into these Reticulan systems, they broadcasted a call for the Reticulan Technocratic Movement to rise up against their Imperial masters. On Mehen and Oninaba, this plan worked and the Thiragin forces crumbled before the combined might of Terrans, Cicek, and local Technocratic rebels in a matter of weeks. On Procyon, however, the UTR miscalculated. House Thiragin protected this key industrial world with a large and combat ready garrison. The Technocratic movement began its insurrection, and fought bravely against their old masters, but the Terran fleets had to fight through heavy Thiragin forces and did not reach orbit in time to help the revolt. The Technocratic movement suffered terrible losses as Thiragin forces were able to hammer them without pause. When Terran units finally landed on Procyon in 2245, they found only scattered Technocratic forces desperately holding out against Thiragin police operations. The UTR mopped up the Thiragin troops that remained, and organized whatever remained of the Technocratic insurgents into a quasi-government on Procyon, sowing the first seeds of the Technate.

The combined might of Terran troops and their allies crushed House Thiragin’s forces in 2245, broke through their defensive lines, and approached Keid, House Thiragin’s regional capital. Until that time, the other Reticulan Imperial Houses were content to see their Thiragin rivals embroiled in what they saw as a minor, if somewhat

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overheated, barbarian rebellion, and did not intervene. Only when Terran forces took complete control of Mehen, a single jump from Keid, did the Empress deploy her Legions, supported by numerous auxiliaries and mercenaries, to crush the Terran rebellion.

Ultimately, they failed. For over a decade, the war deteriorated into a stalemate between the Terran-Cicek-Ssesslessian alliance and the Reticulan Empire. In January 2258, however, after allied military successes sufficiently weakened the Imperial expeditionary forces, Terra launched Operation Burnt Offering: the invasion of Keid itself. Terran, Cicek, and Ssesslessian fleets jumped into orbit over Keid b, landed an enormous ground force, and sparked an all-out Technocratic rebellion. Fighting lasted until late summer 2258, but eventually the UTR took complete control of Keid and removed House Thiragin from its throne.

2258-2260 Terra Ascendant

Terran victories and the conquest of Keid forced the humbled Reticulan Empire to sue for peace. The UTR was now led by the more pragmatic President Alberto Shen, who replaced Singh after her death in 2255. The Terrans accepted the results of the peace negotiations and effectively abandoned – for the time being – their original twin goals of universal liberation of all alien species subjugated by the Reticulans and the establishment of an interstellar republic. Abandoning Singh’s original principles cost Shen a great deal of support among the old guard of the Returnee Circles. However, few could deny that Shen had done the impossible when he returned from the peace negotiations with major concessions: he had forced the Reticulan Empire to fully recognize Terran independence, withdraw from Cicek space, and cede many of its occupied border worlds to the United Terran Republic.

The UTR was quick to re-organize its newfound territories to suit its interests. It granted the Ssesslessian rebels who supported Terra during the War a new, fertile homeworld at Mehen. The Reticulan Technocratic rebels who opposed the Empire and collaborated with the Terrans against their own Imperial regime founded the Reticulan Technate under Terran naval protection. Both the Technate and the Ssesslessian Harmony were – at least partially – Terran client-states, and remain thorns in the side of the Reticulan Empire.

The year now is 2260. Terra, though victorious, licks its wounds. With the war over, President Shen has begun the demobilization process, mustering out a significant portion of Terran soldiers and decommissioning a great deal of military hardware to transition over to a peace-time economy.

This is a time of great opportunities for any enterprising human, the cunning Reticulan, or aggressive Cicek. Profits undreamed of await those bold enough to try and win them. However, danger still lurks among the stars; the enemies of old were defeated, not destroyed. This is where your adventure begins.

The UTR Today and its Outlook

For Terrans, this is a time of great progress and enthusiasm. The stars are wide open. The war economy has receded, and a new economic model opens vast opportunities. The government is proactive, and supportive of initiatives and enterprises—economic or otherwise—by citizens. While the wounds of the war years have yet to fully heal, these are exciting times to live in: “these stars are ours!”, as Vera Singh once said; “Terra will seize them –and our destiny – no matter the cost!”

The United Terran Republic is a rising power in interstellar politics. It has emerged from the bloodshed of the Terran Liberation War invigorated and newly determined. Terrans walk now with their heads held high – proud of their hard-won victory, and proud of the Republic they have built with their own hands. Most Terrans feel a sense of investment and ownership of the UTR. They see it as “our Republic” and “our Terra” and not just “The Government” or “The Man”. Enthusiasm, typically with a patriotic tinge, replaced the cynicism of earlier eras, especially that of the EFA. Everyone agrees that the future ahead is bright. It is a future of expansion, reconstruction, and scientific advance.

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Terran space, however, is still recovering from the horrors and destruction of the Terran Liberation War. Many worlds, primarily among them Belobog, are in ruins. The UTR has invested much of its resources in rebuilding. The Shen administration is now focusing primarily on civilian industrial development. This change involves the privatization of large chunks of the old, government-run, militarized economy, which has brought vast wealth and resources into the hands of private companies which were once overshadowed by the War-era public sector. Colonization efforts are also a top priority of the UTR, both to acquire much-needed resources for reconstruction, as well as an outlet for mounting social tensions on the old Core Worlds. The Terran Ministry of Finance and the Economy enforces strict anti-trust laws to prevent the smash-and-grab monopolization of the economy typical of such liberalization of the economy.

The Shen administration has also begun demobilizing the vast Terran military. While absolutely necessary in wartime, the massive military took an enormous economic toll. It necessitated extreme military spending while simultaneously tying up skilled labor in military jobs rather than in the civilian sector. The demilitarization plan has transferred many units into reserve, and effectively deactivated them; the government has subsequently dismantled a large number of other military formations. This policy has flooded Terran space with countless freshly-demobilized ex-soldiers in search of employment. Second, large amounts of military hardware have been decommissioned, stripped of military-grade components, and sold as surplus. Together, not only do these policies fuel extensive colonial efforts and rapid economic growth, but they also fill starports with unemployed soldiers who often end up as mercenaries, smugglers, or a shadier kind of free traders – all readily armed and equipped with military-surplus gear bought on the cheap from government scrapyards.

The United Terran Republic government now pursues an aggressive foreign policy to the Rimward. Despite the peace agreement with the Reticulans, the Terrans remain suspicious of their former masters' intentions; Terran High Command has stationed much of the Terran Navy's remaining fleets along the Rimward border with the Reticulan Empire. It also deploys them as "allied protection" in Reticulan Technate space. Coreward, Spinward, and Trailing space receive much less military attention. This makes the lives of colonial "outback" pirates, smuggles, and raiders easier, though they do still have to contend with an armed population, at least a third of which possesses military training and experience. They typically will only have to contend with thinly deployed patrol frigates, rather than fleets of carriers and cruisers. The Rimward military bases also house much of the UTR's expeditionary ground forces – especially the former Terran Guard – while most "outback" colonies make do with locally-raised militias or colonial armies of a much lower quality. These forces, however, have recently gained a boost to their power from hand-me-down equipment resulting from the widespread demobilization of the Terran military.

Government

The United Terran Republic is a presidential republic, with a unicameral parliamentary legislature and a constitutionally-based government. The Office of the President holds sovereign power, and the President is the official commander-in-chief of the Terran armed forces. The Terran Constitution theoretically limits the President's power, though a charismatic president such as the late Vera Singh could easily circumvent many of the limits of presidential power contained in the Constitution. Now, just after the end of the Terran Liberation War, most Terrans prefer an authoritative president at the helm who can share power with the Parliament to get things done and mobilize the UTR to protect humanity's newly-gained freedom.

The Terran Parliament, situated in L5 City – the UTR's La Grange-point station capital – comprises 500 seats. The UTR holds parliamentary elections every four years. Parliamentary seats are filled based on a proportional system of representation. The UTR is a unified republic rather than a federation of member-states. Voters across Terran Space cast their vote in favor of one political party or another, and the Electoral Committee, after receiving all ballots by the way of fast courier ships, tallies the votes to determine the proportional division of seats between the parties. The head of the largest party becomes President. The current distribution of seats in Parliament is as follows: Terran Coalition (267), Prosperity Block (121), Terran Front (74) and Sol Invictus (38). Enjoying an absolute majority and the office of President, the Terran Coalition currently enjoys effectively

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unchallenged power; though many among its leadership fear the growth of the Prosperity Block and Terran Front at the expense of the Terran Coalition as the '63 elections grow nearer. For the next three years, however, the Shen administration has a large degree of freedom to act as it sees fit.

The President appoints the Ministers, typically, though not necessarily, from among the members of Parliament from their own party and are approved by the parliament. There are nine governmental ministries: The Ministry of War, Ministry of Finance and the Economy, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel, Ministry of Alien Affairs, Ministry of Health and Welfare, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. As the Terran Coalition currently holds an absolute majority in the government, all Ministers are currently Terran Coalition members of parliament. This means that the Terran Coalition controls a great deal of institutional power, typically from the top level of President and Ministers, down to lower levels in the public service. Indeed, joining the Terran Coalition party is a sure way to improve one's chances of advancing in the public service. This, however, may change if the Terran Coalition loses its absolute majority in the '63 elections.

As mentioned above, the UTR is not a federation. There is only one central government on Terra itself. Due to the realities of space travel, however, centralized management of colonial affairs is impossible. Therefore, each colony – as the UTR considers any extrasolar Terran world – enjoys a great deal of autonomy. The head of a colony's government is the Governor appointed by the Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel. The governor shares power with a locally-elected Planetary Council. The various UTR Ministries, however, appoint their local representatives – local Directors – on each colony world. Some of the colonists living on the high frontier have developed a certain amount of distaste for this sort of heavy-handed, top-down, management from distant Terra. Now that the war is over, some colonies are witnessing the birth of small but growing self-rule movements. In most cases, loyalty to Terra still prevents the formation of any large-scale full independence movement.

The government considers each living human being to be a citizen of the UTR, subject to its laws, required to pay its taxes, and eligible for state-run benefit programs: health insurance, social insurance, and subsidized education. In practice, this applies to the clear majority of humanity. Some, however, live in unsanctioned colonies outside of UTR protection and, in practice, are out of the system. This has proven to be a good way for people to disappear if they so choose. Most who choose a life outside of the UTR do so to avoid the law. Some unsanctioned colonies, however, are built to fulfil the desires of those who wish to live in whatever society they deem worthwhile, without having to comply with UTR laws and regulations. Eventually the UTR will likely expand to these "free" worlds as well, but due to the reconstruction efforts and the costly development of existing sanctioned colonies, this might take a while. Meanwhile the denizens of unsanctioned colonies can continue to live beyond the law.

Interstellar Communication and Mail

So far, science – even advanced Reticulan science – has not found a way to directly communicate at faster-than-light speeds. Starship couriers are the only method of interstellar communication that exists. The newest courier ships can travel four parsecs in a single week-long jump. At best, therefore, assuming immediate relay to another jump-ready starship upon the arrival of a courier at a new system, information travels at the rate of four parsecs per week.

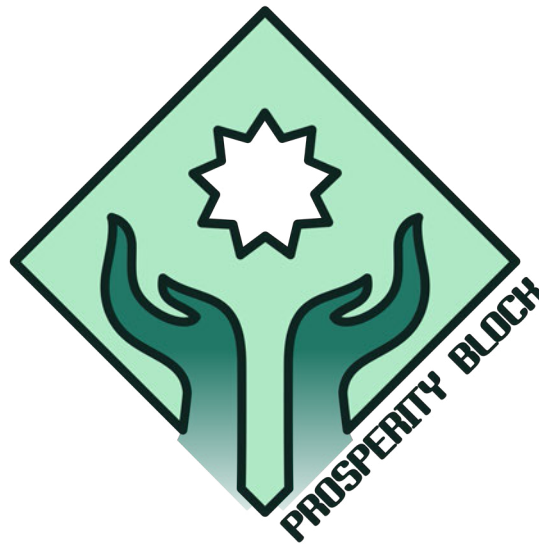
The Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel operates a rapid courier relay system along major communication routes. Most Terran colonies along these routes are within one to three weeks of courier relay from Terra. This adds up to a total round-trip time of two to six weeks. Beyond the major routes communication tends to run at a slower pace using Jump-2 capable Couriers, rather than the much more expensive Fast Courier. In case of more remote colonies, a Courier will usually visit every two weeks, carrying news and mail and new data uploads for the local CommNet.

All the major alien species have similar systems in place for interstellar communications; in fact, the Terran system has its roots in the old Reticulan relay system the UTR inherited from the Earth Federal Administration.

Political Ideologies

During the Terran Liberation War politics was simple: it was Terra versus the Reticulan Empire, and everyone contributed to the war effort. But after the War, internal political differences quickly emerged once more into the spotlight. There are two main questions every politically-astute Terran contemplates in 2260: what is Terra's place in the galaxy, and what should Terrans do about it. Regarding the first question, the Universalist position holds that Terra must focus on the rights and future of all sentient species. Meanwhile, the Nativists argue that humans should look after their own interests first, and focus primarily on Terran matters. The second question divides the Terran political field into the Hawks – those who would choose aggressive military solutions to interstellar political questions – and the Doves, who would prefer more peaceful and diplomatic solutions.

This has led to the emergence of four main political positions in Terran political outlook (though there are others):



Dovish Universalists desire gradual change and transformation of the Reticulan Empire into a more democratic state through peaceful and diplomatic channels: the result being a galactic commonwealth that ensures the rights of sentient beings towards their own cultural and political self-determination. Dovish Universalists are opposed to re-militarization and have strongly supported the demobilization of the UTR military. This position is highly popular among intellectuals, professional diplomats and certain parts of the new middle class arising from the liberalization of Terran economy in recent years. The Prosperity Block is the political party aligned with Dovish Universalist positions.

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Dovish Nativists focus on Terran interests in Terran space without wishing to expand it. They are willing to abandon the cause of reform of the Reticulan Empire for an independent Terran sphere focused on local economic matters. They usually also support economic liberalization and the privatization of the UTRs many state-owned firms and propose deep cuts in military spending. Currently this tendency is rapidly growing in popularity due to the promise of much lowered taxation and the focus on local economies and quality of life. Most Hawks considers the Dovish Nativists position to be verging on the treasonous, since it means abandoning the Grand Cause people fought and died for during the Terran Liberation War for the sake of shorter-term economic benefit. The Dovish Nativist view is quite popular among the new middle class. The Terran Coalition – the UTR’s founding party and once staunch Hawkish Universalists – are now moving in this direction and abandoning the Terran Destiny for a more pragmatic focus on rebuilding and economic growth.



Hawkish Universalists support a full emancipation for all species, and the formation of a Universal, multi-species Republic to replace the Reticulan Empire. They are willing to use military force to carry out what they call the “Terran Destiny”. During most of the Terran Liberation War, Vera Singh championed this position, and most humanity supported her. Now, the Hawkish Universalist position is increasingly the position of the old guard of the Veterans Support Network and other early supporters of the revolt against the Reticulans. Dovish positions, especially Nativist ones, are gaining increasing traction. The Hawkish Universalists are often accused of political nostalgia for the “good old days when everything was simple and we were all brothers and sisters fighting for the Terran Cause”. Unfortunately for them, pragmatism in the face of new political realities is increasingly common. The Hawkish Universalist outlook is common among veteran soldiers, older politicians, and the industrial working class. Under Alberto Shen’s leadership, the Terran Coalition has moved away from this position towards a more Dovish Nativist position. The Terran Front, who split from the Coalition in 2259, adhere to this old cause, and grumble about Vera Singh rolling in her grave. They also have the support of many former Terran Guardsmen discharged in the 2259 military reform.

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Finally, Hawkish Nativists desire Terran dominion over all known space, with Terra and humans ruling over other species, rather than the more egalitarian commonwealth or republic proposed by the Universalists. The Hawkish Nativist view is gaining popularity among younger military officers, especially those who enlisted towards the end of the War rather than at its start. These ambitious officers see Terra's new strength rather than her old weakness. Universalists see Hawkish Nativism as the epitome of Imperialist ambition. The Sol Invictus party is the bastion of Hawkish Nativist politics. Although its supporters are few, Sol Invictus has gained the allegiance of several younger high-ranking UTR military officers. Common conspiracy theories tend to describe Sol Invictus as a cabal planning a *coup d'état*. Thus far, there is no serious evidence to substantiate these far-fetched claims.

Collaborators

Only 28 years have passed since the Terran Revolution of '32. This is a short time compared to the 23th century human life expectancy of 120 years. This means that many people who used to work for the EFA are still around – and in some cases, still in office or in the business world. Legally, any EFA official who did not face trial by 2235 enjoyed the benefits of the General Amnesty established by presidential decree on that year, and received complete pardon for any crimes they had committed in service of the Reticulans. This does not mean, however, that the Terran public has forgotten the “disappearances”, the sale of children to Reticulan human experimentation, the vast amount of graft and exploitation, and other atrocities and crimes carried out by EFA collaborators. While many of the people who worked in various functions of EFA government did not participate in such crimes, and while many did help the Resistance, there were also many collaborators who have committed the above-mentioned crimes. A person exposed as a collaborator cannot be tried in a court of law, but such an exposure can ruin the accused's career or even their life. Therefore, digging up sufficient evidence to denounce a rival for collaboration is an effective tool in Terran politics and business.

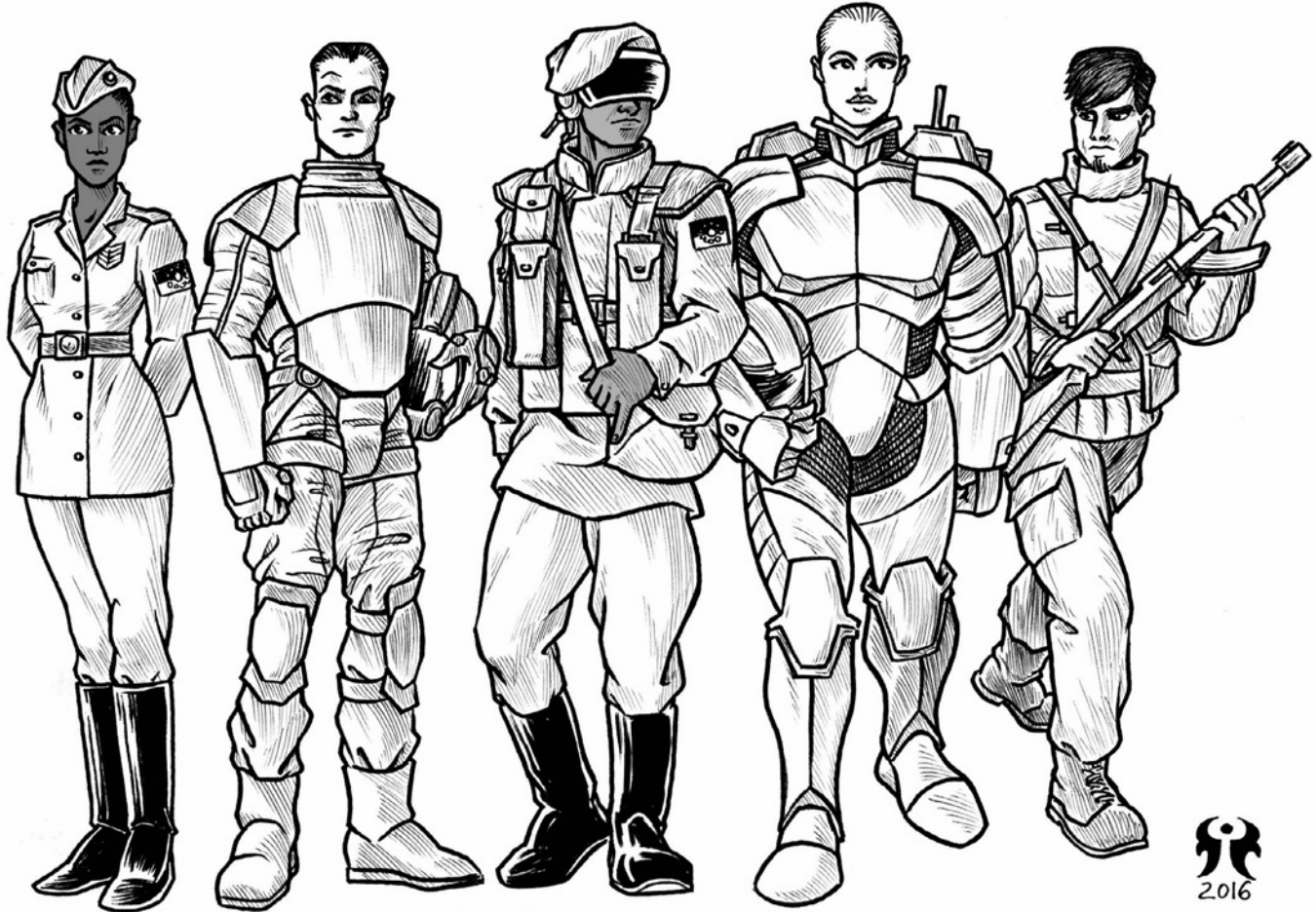
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Military and Paramilitary Forces

The UTR had its roots in the old Chiwak Wars' Returnees' Circles on Terra. Since many of the early Terran resistance members were veteran soldiers, the UTR was able to quickly form a powerful military apparatus after the overthrow of the Earth Federal Administration. The United Terran Republic's military forces are not limited to the Army and Navy, but also encompass the CRC intelligence system, and the Colonial Militia.

Armed Forces of the United Terran Republic, as of the Victory Day 2258

Terran Navy Naval Infantry Terran Army Terran Guard Colonial Militia



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Terran Army

The United Terran Republic Army was quickly created by re-organizing various rebel formations, as well as EFA defectors into a proper military structure. This occurred very early in the Terran Liberation War. The Terran Army High Command answers to the Ministry of War and oversees all ground, air, close-orbit, and aquatic operations, with the exceptions of those carried out by Naval craft and Naval Infantry or Marine troops. The Army is organized into three echelons. The lowest echelon consists of the Colonial Armies, out of which the better units receive starlift transport and join the second echelon, the Expeditionary Forces. The highest echelon is the Terran Guard, an elite force given access to the most advanced technology available to the Republic, that is early TL13 weapons and equipment, and given the most difficult, dangerous, and daring missions.

Colonial Armies

The Terran population is vastly larger than anything required for military manpower. Thus, the UTR does institute militia training, but does not conscript soldiers; the Terran military is a volunteer force. Most volunteers join a Colonial Army. The Colonial Army (or Planetary Army if you live on one of the UTR's main worlds) is a local planetary force which, in addition to standard defense duties, also oversees disaster relief, operates large segments of the local arms industry, and assists with education and welfare services for the general population. Terra herself has a Planetary Army performing these duties. Due to the limited starlift capabilities, the clear majority of Terran ground forces are colonial or planetary armies. Due to the difficulty of maintaining a standardized military force over multiple planets of varying population sizes and economic potentials, the Colonial Army's training and equipment procurement is not uniform between colonies. Most wet-navy, air, and close-orbit forces belong to Colonial or Planetary Army formations.

Expeditionary Forces

In wartime, the best units from each large colony, as well as Terra herself, were given starlift capabilities on board Naval craft and thus became Expeditionary Regiments capable of interstellar deployment. Usually colonies of TL7 or below never formed Expeditionary Forces during the war. As well, since military procurement was locally sourced, each Expeditionary Regiment had its own distinctive flavor and fighting capability. Since Expeditionary Force technological levels varied from TL8 to TL12, many regiments possessed varying degrees of mechanization. Much of the fighting during the war was carried out by Expeditionary Forces deployed *en-masse* after a planetary beachhead was established by Terran Guard troops. Today, the UTR mobilizes the expeditionary forces, and will mobilize them only in case of a major outbreak of war.

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Vanguard Corps

The interstellar colonial effort is vital to Terran interests, even more so than during the War years. Furthermore, far-flung frontier colonies are difficult to defend since the majority of UTR naval fleets are concentrated along the Rimward border with the Reticulans. In order to better defend so many thinly-spread colonies, the UTR formed the Vanguard Corps. These colonist-soldiers receive full infantry training and are then sent to colonies to establish fortified settlements and lend a hand in colonial development. After their four-year tour of duty, many of the Vanguard Corps members remain on their new homes, assisting in their defense and developing new settlements



Terran Guard (former)

The wartime assault echelon of the UTR Army was the Terran Guard, a hardened force of volunteers given advanced training and equipment, including early TL13 weapons near the end of the war, to serve as the mailed fist of the Republic and the Terran Cause. The Guard grew out of the old Returnees' Circles resistance movement back in the EFA days, and was very politically and ideologically motivated. The Guard comprised the most dedicated force loyal to President Singh's ideas and the ideal of universal liberation. Most Guardsmen wore standard sealed combat armor, but approximately one sixth of their forces used prototype Battledress powered armor. The Terran Guard was the Elite of Terran forces - and the Drop Troops, trained and equipped to assault planetary targets from orbit, were the elite of the elite. Accordingly, UTR High Command gave them the most difficult tasks, the ones requiring the best soldiers to accomplish. The casualty rate of the Terran Guard during the War was astonishingly high. After Singh's death, however, the Terran Guard became a dangerous political force and an obstacle in the way of President Shen's reforms. With many of the "old guard" (so to speak) hardliners leaving the Terran Coalition to form the Terran Front party, the guard began to look almost like the Terran Front's private army rather than a more universal military force loyal to the Republic as a whole. Because of this, in 2259 President Shen launched a reform of the Terran armed forces to better adapt them to the current state of 'armed peace' instead to the former total war footing. The most controversial part of these reforms was the creation of the Terran Marines. Shen removed the Naval Infantry from the Navy command and merged it with the Terran Guard to form a unified rapid-reaction spaceborne force. This reform, however, completely dismantled the Terran Guard as an independent force and placed the new Marines under the command of former Naval Infantry officers. The reform involved honorably discharging many old Guardsmen – over half of the old Guard personnel – and was followed up by a thorough excising of the old Terran Guard political and ideological components. Many Terrans lauded this move as it transformed the Terran elite expeditionary forces from what was Vera Singh's revolutionary guard (and now almost the military wing of the Terran Front opposition party) into a professional force loyal to the Republic as a whole. Guard veterans, however, see this as a betrayal of their sacrifice and the sacrifices of so many Terran Guard casualties who fought and died for Singh's Universalist cause under the Guard flag.

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Terran Navy

The UTR Navy was founded during the stormy year of 2233 out of defecting EFA security squadrons, rebel raider-craft, and hastily-militarized merchants. The young UTR invested vast industrial resources into developing a modern war-fleet, and by the early 2240's the Navy fielded a formidable space-going fleet. All Naval forces are under the command of the UTR Admiralty, which answers to the Ministry of War, though due to the lag in communications, many forces are practically independent in their day-to-day operations on the deep frontier.

Starfaring Navy

Like all large starfaring forces in the known universe, the UTR Navy is a carrier fleet, employing waves of fighters that can easily overwhelm any opposition unprotected by its own force of fighter craft. Large operations are carried out by Carrier Groups, each organized around a massive 5,000-ton Carrier. Each Carrier Group includes several Missile Destroyers, multiple smaller armed escorts, troop transports, auxiliaries, scout craft and hundreds of one- and two-person fighter craft. The main difference between Terran and alien forces is the heavy use of Missile Destroyers by the Terrans. The UTR learned to use mass missile barrages to great effect in the early War. Secondary forces not assigned to Carrier Groups include independent cruisers and frigates, as well as system-defence and local-patrol cutters and many transport assets.

Naval Infantry (former)

For boarding actions, shipboard security, and ground operations, the wartime Terran Navy deployed the Naval Infantry. They were sailors and followed the Naval rank structure, but were trained and equipped as elite infantry. Apart from the Terran Guard, the Naval Infantry was the only branch of Terran military that deployed Battledress powered armor suits. Note that until very recently, the UTR lacked a proper rapid deployment Marine force. Instead, traditional Marine functions were split between the Naval Infantry which was used for boarding actions and on-board security, and the Terran Guard's Drop Troops, who were a specialized elite force for high-speed atmospheric insertion and beachhead formation. In 2259, Shen's military reforms merged the Terran Guard with the Naval Infantry to form the new Terran Marines.



Terran Marines

The military reforms of 2259 created a new interstellar rapid-reaction force: the Terran Marines. The Shen administration dismantled the Terran Guard and the Naval Infantry and merged their personnel and materiel into the new Terran Marines. Former Naval Infantry officers occupy most senior posts in the new Marines force. Unlike the old Naval Infantry, however, the Marines are an independent military arm answering directly to High Command and to the President rather than being a branch of the Navy. Marines serve both as ship troops for Naval craft, and as an elite ground force to be used as a spearhead in future planetary operations. It also includes zero-g and hostile-environment specialists, as well as Drop Troops deployed from orbit directly into a combat zone. The Marines have yet to become fully consolidated and serious tensions remain between old Terran Guard and Naval Infantry troopers merged into the same force. Despite these growing pains, the Marines are a formidable military formation. Equipped with the most advanced military hardware available to the Terrans and staffed with seasoned veterans of the Terran Liberation War - the Marines are a force to be reckoned with.



Committee on Reconnaissance and Counter-Reconnaissance (CRC)

The Committee on Reconnaissance and Counter-Reconnaissance (CRC) is the UTR's main intelligence apparatus. Formed out of various underground resistance groups during the late EFA era, the CRC contains 32 Departments, from CRC-1 to CRC-32. The most well-known are CRC-8, which is the main SOPHINT (Sophont Intelligence: the use of spies, infiltrators and other personnel-based methods of intelligence gathering) formation outside of Terran space, CRC-16, responsible for counter-espionage work in Terran space, and CRC-32, the UTR's secretive PSINT (Psionic Intelligence) unit.

CRC is technically a civilian agency, parallel to the Intelligence Corps that operates in both the Terran Army and the Terran Navy. However, the CRC does deploy its own special forces trained and equipped to carry out covert operations in enemy territory. Because of its history as underground resistance groups, the CRC organizes its operatives into autonomous cells which are loosely networked to enhance secrecy. Most of the CRC's operatives do not know the identities of operatives outside of their own cell, making the organization highly resistant to infiltration. Cells have their own autonomous operational budgets and many of them contact the central CRC system only indirectly to further preserve security. The CRC is one of the most efficient intelligence agencies in known space, rivalling even Reticulan infiltration units in audacity and viciousness.

Terran Colonial Militia

A major component in the UTR's defense strategy is the Colonial Militia. The law requires every healthy citizen aged 16 to 64 years who has not been convicted of a violent crime and not actively serving in the military to undergo militia training. Furthermore, any citizen residing on a planet on a permanent basis and not enlisted in the military, law enforcement, scout service, or merchant marine must attend two weekend-long refresher military training courses per year. For most young Terrans, this means taking a two-week Militia training course during the summer vacation following the 10th grade of high school, and then sitting through a weekend of training every six months. After high school, or following any military service, resume militia membership and training until retirement.

The Colonial Militia headquarters provides each member with a weapon – typically the Type-33 submachinegun or the Type-37 assault rifle – and a box of ammunition, as well as a flak jacket. The local headquarters store heavier weapons and vehicles in emergency caches. On worlds with a Law Level of 4 or above, legal authorities expect citizens to keep their militia-issue weapons locked at home except for training sessions. On more permissive worlds, citizens may use these weapons as they see fit, as long as they do not commit crimes and keep their weapons well-maintained.

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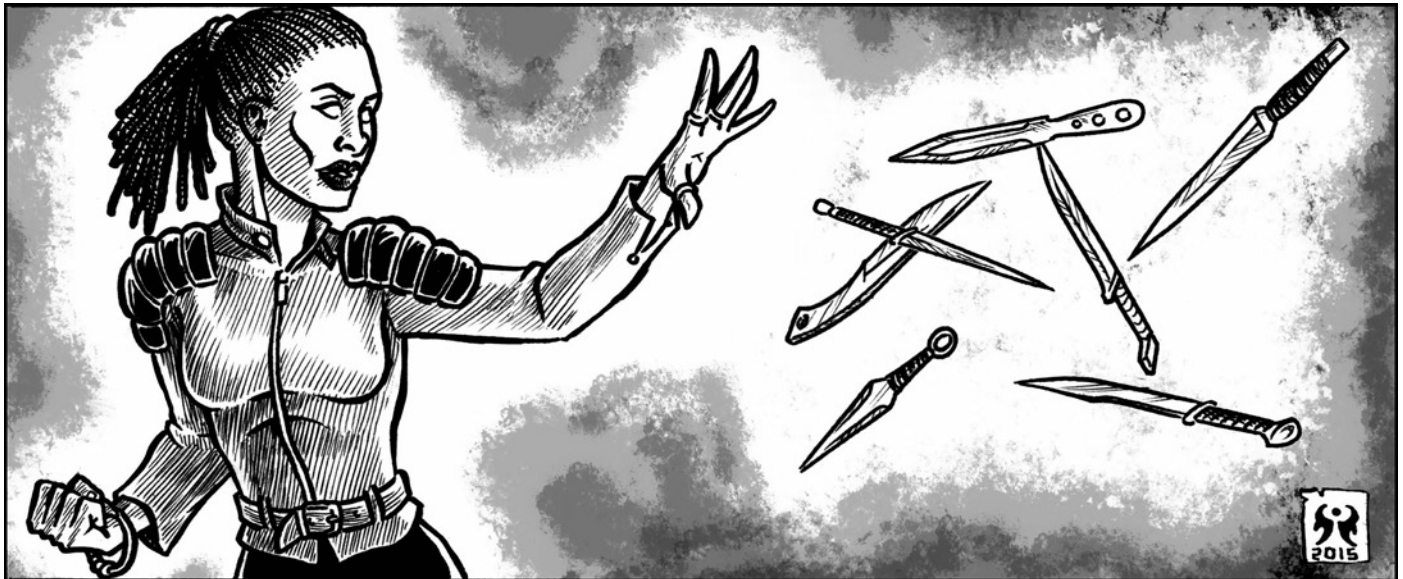
A Colonial Militia headquarters will mobilize their units in case of an invasion. The Militia – like the regular army – is also called in for any large-scale emergency relief efforts, such as dealing with the results of seismic quakes, meteor strikes or mass flooding – not to mention any major trouble with local flora and fauna.

Scouts and the Merchant Marine

Two highly important services in CE and similar games are the Scout Service and the Merchants, better known as the Merchant Marine. Players interested in these services will want to know where their characters have served during their pre-game careers. What follows is a short description of these career options in the UTR.

The “Scouts” is an informal term referring to interstellar explorers and couriers, maintained and operated by the Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel, but sometimes also fielded by corporations and other private concerns. Regardless of bureaucratic affiliation and chains of command, these explorers are typically a wild bunch and share a sense of camaraderie, as they are hardy spacers who risk their lives to boldly go into the unknown – or, in the case of couriers – to deliver critical information and supplies to distant and often dangerous locations. The Scouts are highly informal in culture, as they spend most of their professional lives alone or in very small teams far away from any authority. The Scout career (*CE39*) represents these people.

Merchants who aren’t free traders or brokers either work for corporations, or for the Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel’s Merchant Marine service. During the War, the UTR maintained a state-run freight and passenger service to cater to the needs of the Terran economy. During wartime, voyages near the frontier, or near contested space, or along the notorious “Cicek Run” from Terra to Cicek space and back, was fraught with peril, as there was a constant risk of Reticulan attack. Now that the War is over, the Merchant Marines have been greatly reduced in size, but the UTR still maintains a fleet of “Packet Ships” that provide freight and passenger services to the colonies. These represent typical experiences of characters taking the Merchant career (*CE38*).



Psionics

Prior to the Reticulan conquest, psychic powers were never proven to exist on Earth, despite persistent rumors otherwise. However, the Reticulan's priestly caste demonstrated clear and measurable psionic powers, and under their tutelage, human psychics began to appear as well, typically in the upper echelons of the EFA administration. While it is well known that the Reticulans provided intensive psionic training to these individuals, it is rumored that alleged alien abductions reported prior to the Reticulan conquest – reports of which intensified during the EFA's rule of Terra – had something to do with the emergence of psionics among humanity.

It is now common knowledge that psionic powers are hereditary, though their genetic mechanism is highly complex and not fully understood. The UTR's current estimate is that 0.5% of humanity has psionic potential, though in many cases these abilities are not very powerful. High-powered psions are exceedingly rare, around one person per 50,000 humans having top-level psychic abilities rated at PSI-12 most of whom find employment as CRC-32 agents or PRI inspectors

When the UTR took power in 2232, it quickly recruited any unauthorized "wild" psions, as well as defectors from the EFA psionic cabals, to establish its own psychic cadre. The first group created was CRC-32 – a covert PSINT organization. CRC-32's primary purpose was to hunt down pro-Reticulan infiltrators and psychic loyalists of the old EFA regime. Once its agents managed to neutralize this threat, CRC-32 moved on to provide wider PSINT services to the Terran armed forces. In 2245, it became clear that CRC-32 had relatively little need of lower-powered psions, so the Ministry of Internal Affairs formed the Psionic Research Institute – PRI – to study the civilian applications of psionics and provide training and oversight to non-military psions.

Technically speaking, all psions who are not CRC-32 agents are members of the PRI, and eligible for subsidized training. Testing for psionics has not yet been systematized due to its prohibitively high cost, thus only those whose psionic potential is discovered early in their lives, or who have direct relatives with known psychic powers, receive subsidized training; those applying for testing later in their lives will often have to pay for their testing and for their training, due to the limited resources available to the PRI. Meanwhile, CRC-32 actively tries to recruit those discovered by the PRI to be rated psionic at a level of PSI-8 and above; CRC-32 training is free of charge but, the trainee owes this shadowy intelligence apparatus a big favor. It does not require precognitive powers to be sure that CRC-32 *will* call in their favor, perhaps many times over.

UTR law places several limitations on psionics. Primarily, the law forbids reading another person's mind without prior written informed consent. However, proving consent was not provided is very difficult and thus convictions in "mental trespassing" cases is rare. Telepathic reading also does not constitute admissible evidence in a UTR

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court of law, and counts as hearsay. The PRI employs inspectors to enforce these rules and investigate psionic crimes, though the law places strong limitations on their authority. Any person charged with psionic offenses stands trial at a regular court of law and – if found guilty – is handled by the regular UTR penal system; the PRI has no judicial or penal capacities of its own.

Refereeing CRC-32 and the PRI

By their very nature, psionic powers in general, and telepathy in particular, evoke a certain ominous sensation of dread in most people. After all, someone capable of reading another person's most private thoughts is capable of particularly egregious violations of personal privacy. This reality becomes even more sinister when government agencies like the police are considered. Telepathy and other psionic powers can facilitate some particularly terrible forms of tyranny. In some ways, elements of such tyranny – though limited by the small number of loyal EFA Psions – did exist under EFA rule. It was not sufficient, however, to prevent the EFA's overthrow. The Psionic Research Institute, and to a lesser degree CRC-32, are far less sinister in their intent and capabilities. Thus, the question arises: how should you, the Referee, portray these organizations in your game?

The PRI is a civilian bureaucracy. It suffers from its fair share of red tape and inefficiency, but in general it is little more than an academic institute combined with a somewhat restrictive regulatory agency. It administers psionic testing to parts of the population –coverage is still far from perfect – and provides rudimentary psionic training to those psions it manages to reach. It also funds a certain amount of research into psionic fields. No part of the PRI - even its Inspectors – has significant law-enforcement capabilities or any other means of infringing on the rights of Terran citizens; the law forbids them from telepathically scanning unwilling subjects. Inspectors do investigate crimes suspected to have any psionic elements, and may perform searches (with a warrant) and detain suspects, but they must call upon regular police forces to make a proper arrest and hold suspects. Most police forces maintain a limited “consultant” relationship with the local PRI branch office.

Similarly, even with PRI Inspector testimony, a regular court of law judges a defendant charged with crimes involving psionics. Anyone convicted of such crimes receives punishment as any other convicted criminal, typically administered by the Administration of Prisons and Penal Colonies (APPC). Contrary to the common conspiracy theories circulating in the deeper layers of the Terran CommNets, the PRI maintains no black-site prisons and does not conduct experiments on unwilling human subjects. Such atrocities were the purview of the old EFA, after all. We recommend you play the typical PRI official as a somewhat sleepy, not unduly creative, bureaucrat who might generally mean well but who will usually refrain from going too much out of their way to assist citizens. PRI Inspectors meanwhile, are more akin to private investigators than to actual police officers, and will usually avoid using force except in self-defense.

CRC-32, on the other hand, is a proper paramilitary intelligence agency. As such, it has the authority and capabilities to perform covert actions both inside Terran space and in foreign territory. CRC-32's mandate charges it with dealing with threats to Terran state security associated with psionic activity, as well as to use psionic abilities to gather intelligence and perform covert operations in foreign territory. It has little interest with interfering in Terran politics or dealing with civilians. Its job is to hunt down Exalted Order of Fomalhaut cultists, psychic terrorists and Reticulan spies, not eavesdrop on the thoughts of mundane human dissidents. Generally, a psion will come to the attention of CRC-32 in two ways: if they wish to recruit a psion either as an agent or as an accomplice to a specific mission; or if they suspect a psion of being a psionically-active terrorist or alien infiltrator.

CRC-32 agents are highly professional operatives, anything but a “thought police”. They are specialists in their jobs and usually take great pride in what they do, though – of course – they are not allowed to speak of much of it outside the close circles of CRC-32. We recommend you play them as very serious, very dedicated intelligence and special-forces officials. Always consider, though, the basic principle of restricting player character knowledge to “a need to know basis”. Spreading too much information compromises security and helps the enemy, after all. In many cases, as is customary in their profession for millennia, CRC-32 will use false fronts and provide only partial information to maintain secrecy and avoid leaks. CRC-32 agents also make great patrons for player

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characters, in some cases behind a façade, since using deniable, or better still, unwitting, help is a good way of defeating enemy counter-intelligence. Thus, player characters *shouldn't* usually know that they've just performed a task for CRC-32. If they do know, it might be even worse for them.

Hybrids

A gruesome legacy of the Reticulan occupation of Terra were the mass abductions and experimentations on human subjects carried out by Reticulan scientists. One of the outcomes of the Reticulan experiments was the creation of so-called hybrids. While direct crossbreeding between Humans and Reticulans is biologically impossible, it appears that advanced Reticulan biotech allowed the Reticulans the ability to perform germline genetic modification of the human genome. The result was the insertion of multiple genes of Reticulan origin into human embryos. The Reticulans are tight-lipped about the motivations behind their research, but the scant available data indicates a close correlation between these genetic experiments and the manifestation of psionic abilities in humans. Hybrids with other species than humans do not exist; the exact reasons why human hybrids could be created remains a mystery.

The “Hybrids” are the offspring of the Reticulan genetic experiments. They are biologically human, and genetically close enough to baseline humanity to allow inter-fertility with the general population. However, their Reticulan heritage is visible to the naked eye. They have inhumanly greyish skin, oily, straight, or wavy hair ranging in color from black to red, and large, almond shaped eyes with enlarged black pupils. Hybrids always have slender builds, and have six digits on each hand and foot. Most importantly, Hybrids are, without exception, psionically active. However, when Hybrids have children with “normal” humans, these offsprings only have a 50% chance to be psioncs, and their grandchildren have roughly the same chance for psionic potential as the general Terran population.

The Earth Federal Administration's ruling clique included a proportionally large number of Hybrids, as did the dreaded FSA security apparatus and the Reticulan-controlled puppet state—religion, the Exalted Order of Fomalhaut. This, unfortunately, led to Hybrids being conflated with the old regime and its crimes. Much to the UTR's credit, the government has made significant efforts towards combatting anti-Hybrid prejudice: state media portrays most Hybrids as victims of Reticulan atrocities, and blames the actions of the EFA on the treasonous conduct of specific individuals only. After all, it was hybrids who initially shielded the nascent rebels from Reticulan psions. Regardless, the stigma of being a Hybrid has persisted.

Common derogatory terms for Hybrids include “mutants”, and more crudely, “bastards”. In 2260, calling someone a “bastard” is not only a vulgar insult, but also an accusation that the Hybrid is a member of a treasonous Reticulan fifth column. Despite attempts to stamp out prejudices towards Hybrids, popular media tends to paint them as dastardly villains, almost always casting Hybrids as enemy collaborators, Reticulan spies, or mad scientists.

Because of this deeply entrenched prejudice, many Hybrids choose to lead their lives on the edges of Terran society. They all find their way to CRC-32 or at least the PRI, most have a hard time navigating a society that views them as the progeny of the aliens who were the ultimate enemies of humanity. While good relations with the new Reticulan Technate, combined with the UTR's propaganda efforts to the stigmas attached to Hybrids has improved their situation somewhat, prejudice or even outright hostility are still all too common. Thus, many hybrids take to the stars, settling in colonies that have lower populations, and thus less prejudice, as well as more open space to avoid any hostile locals.

Corporations

The UTR's economy is a rapidly growing powerhouse. In the early War years, a significant portion of the economy was state-run, as the new regime nationalized the various Reticulan and collaborator holdings from the EFA era. This war economy was highly centralized and aimed primarily towards war production; civilian and commercial goods were of secondary importance. As the Terrans began to have the upper hand in the war and rebuild their economy in the late 2240's, the government slowly began to privatize government assets to civilian concerns with the aim of stimulating further economic growth and simplifying economic management. From this grew many of the new Corporations – powerful and dynamic private (or, in the case of TAMI and TRSB, state-run) firms of interstellar size commanding the heights of the post-War Terran economy. The UTR takes great care to ensure that privatization goes in an orderly fashion and does not lead to run-away robber-baron monopolization of the economy.

Chiang Robotics

The premier electronics, information technology, and robotics company in Terran space is without a doubt Chiang Robotics: a sleek, aggressive outfit based out of Chryse City on Mars. Chiang Robotics produces everything: from personal comms, to starship computers, to advanced drones, and robots. A major subsidiary, Chiang Interstellar Mining, engages in automated asteroid and dwarf planet mining, and markets mining and probe drones for use aboard starships. Chiang has branched into cybernetics and man-machine interfaces, fiercely competing in this field with Cicavac, and with smaller and more innovative companies.

Chiang started from a sub-contractor of TAMI producing electronic components for the Terran military, but quickly grew and expanded to encompass many high-tech fields. It also was involved in reverse-engineering Reticulan computers and other electronics, during the War. Because of these early connections, Chiang maintains strong ties with the Reticulan Technate. Many of the rebel Reticulans collaborated with the corporation, smuggling components, and software from what was once Reticulan Imperial space to secret laboratories for immediate reverse-engineering. Indeed, Chiang still employs many Reticulans hailing from the Technate. Corporate culture is highly rational, focused on results rather than on personal relations, echoing the Reticulan influences on this company.

Cikavac Meditech

No medical or pharmaceutical corporation can compete with Cikavac Meditech, headquartered in the Belgrade arcology, Terra. It produces everything from consumer pharmaceuticals and advanced medical gear, to cybernetic implants, and boasts the largest biotech research apparatus in known space. Cikavac has recently branched out into vehicle design and production for medical evacuation and service provision roles, as well as autodoc and medibot production. Another subsidiary, Cikavac Genetech, currently leads research into innovative genetic technology development, including prenatal gene therapy, genetically tailored medicine, and body modifications.

Despite garnering a reputation as a scientifically advanced corporation, several unfortunate rumors and allegations have been made against Cikavac. Scandals involving allegations of illegal human experimentation have broken recently. As well, many a whistleblower has made allegations that Cikavac trades in banned technologies with the Reticulan Empire. Cikavac categorically denies these allegations and refers to them as smear campaigns initiated by their unscrupulous competitors, such as Viriditas. The corporate structure in Cikavac is highly competitive—some would say cutthroat—as every employee's fortunes rise and fall based on carefully-measured production output values. Unofficially, the upper management engages in favoritism, and office politics are quite byzantine in Cikavac's arcologies on Terra and other worlds.

Durnhal Colonial Bank

In 2255, the UTR government sold off parts of the Terran Republic State Bank to private investors. Francois Durnhal, a prominent Quebecois entrepreneur from the Canadian District on Terra, and former Brigadier General in the Terran Army's supply corps, used private capital and a loan provided to him by the TRSB itself to buy

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up most of the TRSB assets. From them, he formed the Durnahl Colonial Bank, which provides financing to a wide variety of interstellar and colonial enterprises, as well as private banking services on the high frontier. The Durnhal Colonial Bank is also heavily invested in many colonial undertakings, and is currently reporting record profits.

The Durnhal Colonial Bank is aggressive in its marketing and investment strategies, but it also presents a friendly face to colonists themselves, providing excellent customer service. Durnhal encourages a high level of competition among its employees, bonuses are high and advancement is rapid for those who contribute to the bank's rapid growth. This bank also maintains a secure and heavily armed courier service, since transporting money, precious metals, and bearer bonds to and from the colonies attracts many potential robbers. It also hires freelancers whenever necessary to secure its interests and protect its investments on the dangerous frontier.

New Terran Frontiers

New Terran Frontiers is a major player in the very big business of colonial development. From genetically engineered seeds designed for use on alien worlds, durable hydroponic equipment, and farm machinery, to interstellar surveying services, New Terran Frontiers is the corporate giant. Its closest competitor is the Viriditas Incorporated. New Terran Frontiers has recently diversified into building specialized starships for interstellar exploration and colonial transport. However, it is still not a serious competitor for Stellardream Inc. or TAMI in the shipbuilding business. New Terran Frontiers also deals in real estate marketing and development both on Terra and the colonies.

Unlike its less orthodox competitor Viriditas, New Terran Frontiers is a very traditional, straight-laced corporation. It is known for a no-nonsense, approach to doing business, and a traditional hierarchical corporate structure. Whenever New Terran Frontiers needs freelancers on the frontier, it prefers to hire ex-Scout and ex-Navy personnel, since the corporation views them as much more reliable than shady freelancers with no respect for authority or the chain of command.

Sirius Arms

With the partial privatization of TAMI's small-arms manufacturing assets, Sirius Arms – once a small survival gear and arms manufacturer headquartered on Belobog – acquired large-scale armament production assets, and has focused on producing small arms. In the span of a few years, Sirius Arms has become a major arms supplier to the private sector. It has also acquired smaller contracts servicing the UTR's armed forces. Sirius Arms' focus is on high technology weaponry, mainly lasers, plasma projectors, and gauss weapons. It also produces a variety of personal armor and military accessories.

Sirius Arms has a highly competitive internal culture, but is known for recruiting the best talent in the field of arms development and rewarding them accordingly. However, it is an open secret that Sirius sells to all sorts of undisclosed parties, presumably other corporations, security companies and mercenary forces. Another rumor – flatly denied by the corporation's public relations division – is that Sirius Arms supplies the Children of Gaia terrorist group.

Solana Trading Inc.

Solana is a major interstellar trading broker and shipping company. It has grown quickly, due to the influx of cheap decommissioned starships resulting from the Shen administration's demobilization process. Solana began as a private company flying the Cicek Run in what was then barely-explored space during the War. Now Solana has strong ties with Cicek merchant and industrialist tribes, and imports cheap Cicek goods to Terran space and exports high technology items to the Cicek. Solana also trades with the Ssesslessians, the Technate, and even the Empire, now that the peace agreement permits trade between the former belligerents.

Solana has a near-monopoly on interstellar shipping, competing only with Stellardream Inc. and with smaller operations only on the frontier. Solana's dominance of trade routes is a result of its highly efficient network of

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carefully-maintained freighters. Solana is well-known for its high salaries and incentive programs for trading crews. Recently, Solana has branched into starship spare part manufacturing to reduce its dependence on TAMI and Stellardream products it uses for fleet maintenance. This company also engages in starport operations, typically as a sub-contractor of the local authorities. Currently, Solana executives consider expanding into the ship-building and overhaul business, though the corporation is yet to take any concrete steps in this direction.

Stellardream Inc.

Stellardream is the largest private shipbuilding concern in Terran space, second only to the state-owned TAMI. It is also a major interstellar shipping company. In recent years, Stellardream has managed to expand its shipbuilding and starlift assets, largely by purchasing TAMI assets as the Chen administration privatized them. Stellardream is strictly a civilian shipbuilder, though it has recently diversified into paramilitary corporate-security and “security contractor” ship designs. This venture has had a hard time breaking into a market already flooded by decommissioned military-surplus ships that are the result of the UTR military demobilization. Stellardream works hard to build a glamorous, prestigious, and “shiny” reputation in ship design, as opposed to the much more workmanlike and Spartan design philosophy of TAMI starships.

In the common civilian perception, Stellardream is “the star-liner company”: the corporation producing and operating yachts, passenger liners and resort space stations. In reality, it is also a major builder and operator of freighters, though its marketing department does not emphasize this in advertising, except in certain circles. Stellardream is an exclusive workplace, with high entry requirements and high pay, as well as a luxurious corporate culture. There are many perks for the lucky few hired by Stellardream, be they shipyard workers, star-liner stewards, engineers, captains, or managers.

Terran Aerospace and Military Industries (TAMI)

Formed from the UTR-mandated merger of nationalized EFA arms manufacturers, TAMI enjoyed massive growth during the early stages of the War, becoming the primary supplier of armament, starships, and heavy equipment for the UTR military. This government-run military production firm once produced anything used by the UTR military: spacecraft, combat rifles, grav-gunships, combat rations and replacement boot soles. Under the Chen administration’s mass-demobilization and privatization policies, the government sold off major subsidiaries of TAMI to private parties. Chief among these privatized assets were its civilian spacecraft division and parts of its small-arms manufacturing facilities, sold off to Stellardream Inc. and to Sirius Arms, respectively.

TAMI personnel see themselves as public servants and patriots producing arms for the protection of Terra. The entire corporation has a military culture, with chains of command and discipline. Despite this, most employees take great pride in their jobs. There are, however, several rumors of corruption in TAMI. This is unsurprising considering how large, powerful, and all-encompassing the corporation still is, despite the privatization. Most of these rumors contend that TAMI has sold off a great deal of wartime surplus stock to customers under questionable circumstances. Several private security firms led by former high-ranking UTR military officers have gotten shockingly preferential treatment from TAMI sales reps. There are also serious concerns that organized crime groups with alleged CRC ties have been able to arm themselves with TAMI equipment. A few pirates waging illegal personal wars against the Reticulan Empire might have also “stumbled upon” previously “lost” TAMI weapons stockpiles. TAMI public relations officials are quick to point out that their employer has the full confidence of the Shen administration, and supports the peace treaty with the Reticulan Empire.

Terran Republic State Bank (TRSB)

In 2232, to generate funds for the War effort, the nascent UTR nationalized the larger banks operating under the EFA, and most especially any House Thiragin financial assets in Terran space. The new government united these assets under the umbrella of the Terran Republic State Bank. This enormous financial institution provided funding for Terran military industries and military procurement, as well as for colonial ventures and industrial development. For a long time, it also served as the largest commercial bank in Terran space. In the mid-2250’s,

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the Chen administration privatized several of the TRSB divisions, especially its colonial holdings, and parts of its private commercial banking system. Most of these assets are now part of the Durnahl Colonial Bank, though several smaller banks also benefitted from this influx of competitively-priced banking assets.

Today the TRSB is still the largest bank in Terran space, and has focused on large-scale industrial investments as well as commercial banking. The UTR Ministry of Finance effectively controls this bank, and uses it to advance government economic policy. Recently, the TRSB has granted favorable credit conditions to joint-stock companies, and has provided affordable pensions to government employees and military personnel. Together with the Durnahl Colonial Bank, TRSB invests heavily in starship and the financing of interstellar trade, and is the financial institute behind the Subsidized Merchant program operated by the UTR government.

Viriditas Incorporated

A close competitor of New Terran Frontiers, Viriditas Incorporated is a major biotechnology firm that is heavily invested in biological technologies useful to interstellar colonization and terraforming. This company developed the current Body Modifications available to Terrans (see Chapter 3). Viriditas also has extensive pharmaceutical and chemical subsidiaries, as well as a more mundane bread-winner: industrialized agriculture equipment. It does, however, wish to maintain a different brand image than its competitors, banking heavily on the “green” aspects of biotech and promoting an environmentally-conscious and progressive image. However, Viriditas has had its reputation tarnished recently by several small-scale but damaging industrial espionage scandals. The aftermath of which exposed the company’s tendency for hiring shady “deniable assets” for morally questionable missions.

The Viriditas Incorporated has a reputation for cultivating an “open”, “liberal”, and “free thinking” corporate culture. Its corporate structure minimizes hierarchies, and management practices include a large dose of consensus-based decision making and “industrially democratic” practices. Viriditas’ workplace atmosphere is highly informal. Employees enjoy the freedom to select their own fashion style, and there are rumors that some corporate offices permit the use of legal mind-altering substances. More sinister rumors hint that Viriditas is really a commercially-oriented cult. Some go as far as to insinuate that it has connections to the Exalted Order of Fomalhaut.

Technology and Economics

The inhabitants of the United Terran Republic enjoy a level of technology undreamed of by previous generations. This is owed in no small part to the absolute necessity of developing advanced military technologies to counter the Reticulans’ technological edge in the early part of the Terran Liberation War. Pure military technologies, as well as supporting technologies, rival those of their old foe, though armament is far less standardized in many Army units. Civilian technology is less advanced, as the Terran economy has only recently begun its shift to peacetime production.

Still, Terran civilians enjoy advanced automatic and computer services, modern medical care and – on the core worlds – cheap power and transportation systems. In *Cepheus Engine* rules terms, Terran military hardware is typically at TL11-TL12 except for the Terran Marines who are equipped to TL13 standards. Civilian technology is TL11 and high-tech goods around TL12, with some “early” TL13 goods being advanced consumer products available only in the Core. Even the colonies – at least the legitimate ones – rarely have a technology level below TL10. This is due to the wide availability of modern supplies and the existence of portable fabrication equipment capable of producing batteries, spare parts, ammunition, and other industrial supplies even in the smallest official colonies. Even a typical illicit beyond-the-frontier colony rarely has a technological level of less than the TL5-TL7 range.

UTR citizens have access to state-subsidized TL11 healthcare which has prolonged the human lifespan by decades. The average UTR life expectancy is now 120 years, and most can expect to live out those years in relatively good health. Advanced telecommunication technologies allow instant access to vast arrays of information, education,

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and entertainment. Public transportation on the core worlds is carried out at high speed and efficiency thanks to grav-levitation technologies. Fusion power means that even the poorest Terran citizen enjoys an abundant and cheap supply of electricity for light and heating.

The Terran economy has only recently begun recovering from a devastating 28-year-long multi-front war. While reconstruction is highly profitable and allows many opportunities for economic growth, most industries still suffer from significant war damage. Furthermore, until very recently, the war effort claimed most available resources, which greatly impacted the quality of life of the average Terran citizen. Wartime taxes were high, and the government understandably directed all available resources towards military production at the expense of the civilian sector. Now the war is over, and the quality of life of the average Terran citizen is on the rise.

United Terran Republic economic policy now follows what has been dubbed the “Terran Model”: a strong, though young, private sector drives the economy, while state authorities retain a firm hold on military industries, infrastructure, as well as on a significant part of heavy industries, mining, and colonial development. The result is that jobs—both in the private and public sectors—are abundant; the post-War reconstruction has made them even more commonplace, leading to a shortage of labor and thus rising wages and negligible unemployment. Meanwhile, the government subsidizes welfare, education, and healthcare. Taxes, however, tend to be high, since the Terran military machine – even at its current reduced size – is very expensive to build and maintain. The Prosperity Block’s growing support is largely owed to its platform of demilitarization and tax cuts.

The Colonies

Since the early phases of the Terran Liberation War, the United Terran Republic invested heavily in interstellar colonization and colonial development. The government, and now corporations, colonized the stars as part of the quest for rare military resources. Now that the War is over, both the government and private concerns have invested even more into colonizing the Spinward and Coreward frontiers. For many Terran citizens, this is a way to evade the crowded and war-damaged cities of the core worlds and begin a new life on the high frontier. Many people prefer to breathe the thin, dusty air of Wormwood or work the arid soil of Bhadrakali rather than taste the polluted air of overcrowded Terra or make a living among the craters and shelled ruins of Belobog.

The Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel provides incentives for individuals and companies to invest in the colonies. Several of the newer frontier colonies enjoy major tax exemptions, and so do capital investments in colonial endeavors. Another incentive is the Colonial Bond Program. Each applicant to the program receives a low-interest loan – typically of between Cr.20000 and Cr.100000– for building a home and/or a business in the colonies. The money can only be redeemed on a colony and invested there; the funds are not valid for investment in core-world assets and properties. The borrower has to begin repaying the loan after ten years. However, if the borrower has resided on a frontier colony during these ten years and invested the funds there, the loan is converted into a grant and does not have to be repaid. Because of the Colonial Bond Program, the colonies on the frontier are booming. The Bond Program has been hailed as one of the most effective pieces of legislation ever passed through the UTR Parliament.

Legally, the land on any world discovered by Terrans or conquered by the Terran armed forces is property of the UTR government. However, the state has little interest in managing such vast amounts of land and subsequently offers it for sale to individuals and corporations; sometimes – especially in the case of less-attractive ‘marginal’ colonies – the government even offers land for free to anyone who desires to move there. Since infrastructure is minimally developed, or virtually non-existent, on such colony worlds, land prices are very low. Further colonization and development of the frontier has spurred land speculation, especially in case profitable resources will be found nearby.

Due to the relative safety of TL11+ low berths, mass-migration to distant worlds typically employs suspended animation to lower expenses and thus keep off-world tickets very affordable. Some corporations fund colonists’ travel expenses, especially if they have desired skills. A colonization expedition usually employs both enormous ‘colony ships’ equipped with many low berths, and smaller freighters carrying equipment and supplies.

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With low populations, most of the far colonies are not profitable for corporate merchant lines to service, unless the colony itself is a corporate colony and thus served by corporate freighters. In many cases, supplies and goods arrive at the colonies and leave them by way of free traders, who operate on a much smaller scale. Other ‘merchants’, however – of the piratical kind – also ply these distant and sparsely-patrolled space lanes, away from any major Terran Navy presence. To fight the threat of pirates and raiders, the UTR navy employs TL11 300-ton Patrol Corvettes (*CE139*) and Patrol Frigates (*CE142*) on long patrols to enforce the law and deter piracy, but they cannot cover the entire frontier. Rumors abound of illegal industrial espionage between corporations on the high frontier, far from the long arm of Terran law. There are also sensational news reports in the core worlds of bandits and outlaws operating openly on the frontier. Things are dangerous on the high frontier, but the potential rewards of frontier life are enough to justify the risk for millions of people desperate to make a new start after the War.

Religion and Spirituality in the 23rd century

A century of Reticulan subjugation and nearly three decades of war have not erased the need for faith among Terrans; faith was one of the things that enabled humanity to survive in the face of the hardships it had to face. During the EFA years, the Exalted Order of Fomalhaut enjoyed state support and was the de-facto state religion of the EFA. While the EFA did not openly persecute other religions, it did discriminate in favor of Order members in various manners, especially in terms of advancement in the governmental apparatus. It also gave the Order tax exemption status, and even state funding, while taxing all other faiths. This policy would backfire as many of the established, native Terran faiths viewed the Order of Fomalhaut as a false religion, and those who worshipped it as idolaters. Some even considered the Order to be in league with Satan himself. Unsurprisingly, much of the early anti-EFA resistance was supported by clergy of many different faiths, and much of the resistance’s early rhetoric had a significant religious feel to it.

The UTR, on the other hand, was – and still is – a secular government adhering to political convictions of republicanism and Terran independence. However, it has a positive attitude towards the old Terran faiths, connecting them to Terran patriotism and viewing them as authentically Terran in nature, as opposed to the alien-imposed EFA culture. Furthermore, it sees Terran religion as the natural answer to the Order of Fomalhaut’s traitorous preaching. Native Terran religious institutions have had their tax-exempt statuses restored, and religious people no longer face discrimination when advancing in the civil service. The Terran military also provides religious services to its soldiers, sailors, and marines. In most large military units, there are places of prayer for the three Abrahamic faiths and for Buddhism, while smaller and more isolated units sometimes have chaplains serving the faith most common among the troops.

The Abrahamic faiths – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – are still highly popular. Religious fanaticism declined to a great degree as Terran patriotism took hold of the masses, and relations between these three faiths has improved in UTR times. Adherents of Buddhism and Hinduism are common as well as are many smaller faiths. In addition to the old faiths and the banned Order, however, a few new religious beliefs have emerged. The most common of those is the Terran adoption of Cicek shamanism. As Terran and Cicek troops spent much time together during the War, they occasionally would influence each other’s customs and beliefs. Commonly, many Cicek good luck charms and talismans found their way into the possession of Terran soldiers.

Crime and Punishment in the UTR

Once societies delineate between legal and non-legal activities, there is, by definition, crime. The near-martial law situation which existed during the War served as a deterrent against violent crime, but property and fraud offenses were common. Today, the heavy-handed militarized regime has eased its grasp on Terran society, and the UTR has seen a mild resurgence in violent crime across its territory. The Consortium (p.40) is the largest organized crime syndicate in Terran space, but there are other groups filling similar niches as well. Among the core worlds, criminal activities generally include all sorts of property crime like theft, white collar crime like fraud, as well as a certain degree of street violence. Murder is still relatively rare. In the colonies, violent crime

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is much more common: one can find pirates, raiders, and highway robbers ready to prey on hapless colonists or free merchants, as well as colonists retaining arms in preparation for fighting raiders and other aggressors. However, there is a corresponding decrease in property crimes and white collar criminal activity. There is just less to be stolen, the further one gets away from the core worlds.

Like crime, policing in the UTR varies according to the needs of the core worlds and the colonies. In the past, the Terran Army's Military Police was called upon to handle a significant amount of civilian policing duties on many Terran worlds. There were fewer police officers available then, since most were serving in the military. Now that the War is over, policing in the core is strictly the responsibility of civilian police authorities, typically organized at the city or district level and coordinated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Both the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Justice maintain their own higher-level law-enforcement departments tasked with combatting crime at planetary and interstellar levels. Out in the colonies, however, each settlement typically employs a small, local colonial police department to handle any law enforcement duties. In situations requiring a larger, armed response to deal with outbreaks of violence, bandit raids or terrorist activity, the local Colonial Militia is called upon to provide the muscle necessary to enforce the law. The typical colony has a frontier mentality, with many colonists having military training and wartime experience. Thus, colonists will fight back against aggression or piracy, though with a varying level of effectiveness.

Terran courts hold trials by jury, though judges hold a great deal of authority and are given some leeway in trials. In the case of small colonies, a single judge might travel between several colonies and hold trials when planet-side. The UTR favors speedy and efficient justice, sometimes at the expense of deliberation. Any judge, even travelling colonial judges, is granted authority to rule in any case, and not all cases may be appealed, at least without evidence of the previous jurisdiction's miscarriage of justice. More liberal Terran politicians sometimes criticize this as military-style summary justice, but many Terran citizens prefer this expediency over long, drawn-out, and expensive trials.

UTR prison sentencing tends towards short jail-terms combined with productive labor and rehabilitation programs. Usually, suspects serve time in jail before their trial – if they are not released on bail – and the sentence itself rarely involves lengthy incarceration in a prison on a core world. Fines are a common penalty, as is “transportation”: sending the convicted criminal to a colony. There are several types of transportation sentences. The lightest is a requirement to independently travel outside the core worlds and stay off them for a certain period of time. The government even provides a one-way low-passage ticket out of the core. The heaviest transportation sentence is exile to a penal colony on the high frontier – such as some of the sub-colonies on Rudra, Wormwood, and even Jambavan – for imprisonment and hard labor in colonial construction. The UTR reserves this for only the more serious violent offenders.

The UTR carries out capital punishment for those convicted of high treason, first degree murder, child molestation, rape, piracy, and terrorism. Convicts are executed by firing squad in the case of murderers, rapists, and child molesters. Those convicted of high treason, piracy and terrorism are hanged. “Spacing” – throwing people to hard vacuum without a vacc suit – was the EFA's favorite method of execution, and is considered an act of cruel and unusual punishment today. No such penalty exists under UTR law. The Administration of Prisons and Penal Colonies, under the authority of the Ministry of Justice, maintains and operates the jails and penal colonies, and is also responsible for transporting criminals between them and to them.

One option for many convicts, in lieu of jail, heavy fines, or transportation, (or even a death penalty sentencing for murder) is military enlistment, as the UTR believes that military discipline can be healthy for the rehabilitation of a criminal offender. During the War, this typically meant dangerous front-line service as part of a penal battalion. After a four-year tour of duty, assuming the convict survived combat – which was not likely – they would receive a full pardon and have their criminal record erased. Since the mid-War, however, another option was more regular enlistment. This is now a typical non-prison option for juvenile delinquents of the age 14 and above, who are frequently offered enrolment in a military-preparatory boarding school up to the age of 18. They must then serve at least one four-year term in the military.) Once mustered out from service, the ex-convict

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receives a “clean slate” to begin life anew. Similar programs exist for older offenders, typically allowing them to join the military in place of other penalties. However, now that the war is over and dangerous front-line service no longer exists, this may involve more than one term of military service before being pardoned.

Bearing firearms in Terran space

“Armed citizens are the bulwark against Reticulan subjugation. If the enemy sets foot on any of our worlds, they will be met by a thousand Terran gun barrels carried by our citizens”

- Vera Singh, 2235

The United Terran Republic enjoys the support of an overwhelming portion of its population. The government has no fear of armed citizens. On the contrary, it arms them as an effective deterrence of an alien invasion of Terran space. In case of an invasion, every Terran citizen above the age of 16 is expected to take up arms and help defend the Republic. Even outside the militia system Terran citizens usually arm themselves and carry those arms in public, though some worlds do prohibit carrying concealed weapons.

On most Terran worlds, almost everyone may bear firearms, or at the very least, stunners. Law Levels above 6 are extremely rare in Terran space. Characters registered in the local militia system can usually carry weapons as if the local law level was two steps lower; though the provisions of Law Level 1 usually apply even for militia members. Worlds with Law Level 0 permit almost anything. Ex-military characters of former rank O4 or higher, whose service is known to the local constabulary, can typically act as if the local Law Level is 1.

In space, the UTR government acknowledges the fact that crews occasionally have to defend themselves from pirates, hostile lifeforms, and other threats. Therefore, starship crews may carry weapons as per Law Level 1. However, the law requires passengers on commercial liners to deposit their firearms in the ship’s locker during travel to minimize hijacking attempts; carrying of melee weapons is usually still permitted.

Most Terrans have little problem with the Cicek bearing arms in public as they are welcomed as famous allies of Terra during the War. They do, however, frown upon other aliens carrying weapons. For all aliens except for Cicek and Reticulans, treat the Law Level as one step higher. For Reticulans, treat the Law Level as two steps higher.

Criminal and Terrorist Groups

Most human societies have groups operating on the fringes of the law, or completely outside the law. The United Terran Republic is no exception. Criminal syndicates, terrorists, and illegal cults all threaten public order and safety in the UTR. This chapter details four such groups, each a formidable adversary both to UTR authorities and adventurers.

Children of Gaia

The Sol Invictus party, though having a relatively small support base, has enjoyed steady growth in recent Terran elections. This aggressively Hawkish Nativist group stands for furthering Terran interests, and they are quick to promote the military solution to most foreign policy problems. Sol Invictus is a legitimate political movement, and it counts several war heroes amongst its members. It seeks to further its Nativist agenda through legal and political means, and has enjoyed modest success in this endeavor. But not all Terran nativists limit themselves to legal, political means. The Children of Gaia, a radical splinter group of Sol Invictus, believe that Terran freedom and interests can only be preserved by direct force of arms, and they are willing to engage in terrorist activities to further their goals.

The Children of Gaia follow an ideology of pure Terran Nativism. They want a strong, independent Terra. They view humanity as superior to all other alien species, and thus view all aliens as enemies to be kept at bay. The Children of Gaia believe that it is humanity’s manifest destiny to rule a new interstellar empire, centered on Terra. While they deny allegations of outright anti-alien racism, many of their messages carry a distinct undertone of Terran racial superiority over other sentient life forms, Reticulans in particular. Much of the Children of Gaia’s

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rhetoric involves accusing the Reticulans of some insidious plot to retake Terran space and conquer Terra once more.

The Children of Gaia have three distinct, though interconnected, components to their movement. The first is their political wing, which presents itself as a thoroughly patriotic alternative to Sol Invictus. It does not run for Parliament, but does compete in local municipal and planetary council elections. The political wing has a legitimate reputation, and boasts several newly mustered-out young UTR military officers among its members. The second component is the Gaian Guard, an illegal paramilitary force, typically involved in street violence and public attacks on aliens. The Gaian Guard is a popular group among sports hooligans and street toughs. The third component is the Children of Gaia itself, a terrorist organization that attacks alien interests and "alien sympathizers" both in UTR space and beyond.

It is unknown how the Children of Gaia are funded, but they do appear to have deep pockets. Children of Gaia operatives usually carry advanced weaponry, and rumor has it that they also have access to advanced cybernetics and to non-conventional arms. Some persistent rumors link the Children of Gaia to their apparent political cousin, the Sol Invictus party. Sol Invictus, for their part, strongly deny such slanderous allegations. Other rumors link certain elements in the UTR military to the Children of Gaia, especially among the younger, more professional officer corps, and newer members of the Terran Guard. Whoever their backers, the Children of Gaia pose a threat to the UTR and its policies.

The Consortium

Organized crime is a characteristic of all human societies, and the old EFA was no exception. The Consortium originated during the dark days of the EFA occupation. In EFA labor camps, the inmates organized their own hierarchy, made their own underground trade, and bribed the guards to let their leaders run things as they wished. Here the Consortium was born — a criminal network uniting underworld figures and illegal activities. The Consortium engaged in a wide variety of criminal activities, but made their profits in illicit trade in alien technology, drug trafficking, and protection rackets.

When the UTR took power, the Consortium split between the "Patriots" who cooperated with the new government's War effort, and the "Free Consortium" who preferred to remain apolitical and made money from both sides of the conflict. This led to a feud between the two factions of the Consortium during the long War years. The CRC even funded the Patriots to weaken the Free Consortium. Although the Patriot faction refrained from war profiteering operations, it still engaged in criminal acts, especially loansharking and protection rackets. The Free Consortium on the other hand, had little qualms about making hefty profits from war profiteering, especially when the UTR enacted war rationing measures that drove up the price of luxury goods.

Now that the War is over, both factions have reconciled to a certain degree. The tidal wave of wartime patriotism has receded, and profits are to be made among the stars. Some old feuds still simmer, of course, but for the most part the motive for profit trumps the desire for revenge for deeds and misdeeds committed during the War. With the black-market waning following the complete abolition of rationing, profitable criminal enterprises now involve money laundering, loansharking, prostitution, protection rackets, and smuggling operations. The Consortium does not engage in piracy (there is more money to be made in smuggling), and tends to avoid crimes such as violent robberies which attract the attention of the UTR police forces. The Consortium is happy to provide loans to pirates and sell weapons to armed robbers and raiders, but goes to great lengths to ensure that such criminal banking cannot be traced to its source.

Today the Consortium is a loose network of interstellar organized criminals, a framework in which various gangs can coordinate their actions and resolve their disputes. The Consortium has fingers in many pies, from corporations to colonial development, and rumor has it that it has its connections among high-level UTR politicians. In the typical adventure, the Consortium can be adversaries, support, and patrons. The player characters might be hired to defeat Consortium thugs, or they might be on the hook for a Consortium loan, or they might be asked to carry out a deniable crime by a Consortium patron.

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Exalted Order of Fomalhaut

The highly illegal Exalted Order of Fomalhaut was once the defacto state religion of the EFA. The Order believes that the Star Fathers came to Earth in the distant past and uplifted humanity from its primitive state. The Reticulans, the myth goes, are the first children of the Star Fathers, and thus share the spark of their holiness. While the EFA never made the Exalted Order an *official* state religion, many of its high-ranking officials were cult members – especially those who were Hybrids. When the EFA fell, the new UTR executed the Exalted Order's leaders for treason and collaboration; angry mobs of Terran patriots burned down the Order's temples.

During the War, the Exalted Order of Fomalhaut went underground, pursued by CRC-16 and CRC-32. The Order's remaining adherents received training in Reticulan psionics, and were highly organized. Rumor has it that they still receive assistance from the Reticulan Empire and serve as its spies. They were never completely eradicated, and every now and then UTR authorities expose an Exalted Order cell. Usually, its members stand trial for treason; the lay brethren receive lengthy sentences at an APPC penal colony, while the cell's leaders are hung for high treason.

Despite prosecution and a monstrous reputation, the Exalted Order of Fomalhaut still has a strong draw. The promise of learning unrestrained psionic powers without government supervision, as well as the lust for expensive alien technology, brings many power-hungry individuals into the Exalted Order's arms. This is especially true in the High Frontier, where UTR government control is minimal and it is easy to hide. Some say that the Exalted Order's goals involve the re-conquest of Terran space by the Reticulan empire, while others claim that the Exalted Order has an even worse goal in mind.

The Exalted Order is a threat — an insidious cult, an enemy spy network, and a terrorist organization. Its members are experts in covert operation and infiltration, and ever prepared to evade a government crackdown. Adventurers and mercenaries might find themselves combatting the cult's complex, covert machinations, shrouded in secrecy and psionic manipulations. Battling the Exalted Order requires great care, however, as few of its plots are straightforward or overt, and it works through daggers in the dark and psionically—implanted suggestions rather than with open, brute force.

Interstellar Liberation Army (ILA)

The UTR under Vera Singh's administration supported the cause of Universal Liberation, sometimes called the "Terran Cause" or the "Terran Destiny": the destruction of the Reticulan Empire and its replacement with a federal (or confederated) multi-species interstellar republic. More pragmatic winds now prevail, however, under the Shen administration and the cause of Universal Liberation died in the name of expediency for realpolitik, interstellar trade, and bilateral diplomacy. Today's Terran government accepts the Reticulan Empire as a necessary evil to be contained and negotiated with, not overthrown—at least for the time being. However, some Terran citizens – especially ones who fought on the front lines for the Terran Cause – still refuse to lay down their weapons and accept peace with what they see as a monstrous interstellar tyranny.

The Interstellar Liberation Movement (ILA) is the most radical expression of such stubborn idealism. It seeks to continue the War by guerrilla and terrorist methods, and will not rest until the Reticulan Empire is dismantled. The ILA usually targets the assets and personnel of the Reticulan Empire, but occasionally will strike at the current Terran government, which it accuses of being defeatist or even treasonous. The ILA also has ties with various underground rebel groups inside Reticulan territory, such as the more radical factions of the Technocratic Movement or armed independent movements of species still under Reticulan rule. The ILR also has strong support within the Ssesslessian Harmony.

Officially, the UTR government has declared the ILA an illegal organization. The Shen-era Terran Coalition views the ILA as an embarrassment trying to spoil their more pragmatic diplomatic efforts. However, there are those in the Terran military and even the CRC – typically among the "old guard" types who have a yearning in their hearts for the "Good Old Terran Cause" – who are far more sympathetic to the ILA. This sympathy is typically

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expressed by turning a blind eye to the movement's activities, but from time to time some military official makes sure that some guns "fall off the back of a grav-sled" and into ILA hands. The ILA also now enjoys a steady supply of begrudged Terran Guard veterans dismissed during the recent military reforms. These people often resent the Shen administration's foreign policies and dream of reviving the war for universal liberation.

CRC-8 – the SOPHINT espionage arm of the CRC - also has an interest in the ILA, since they employ this terrorist movement as a false-flag for covering up their own covert operations in Reticulan space. After all, if an assassination attempt or a botched sabotage operation can be blamed on "criminally insane terrorists who think that the war is still on", a covert CRC-8 operation will not endanger the peace agreement. CRC-8 uses the ILA infrequently to avoid suspicion, but from time to time ILA cover is just the right solution to the CRC's operational problems.

The ILA can serve as a major villain and adversary to adventuring travelers. More interestingly, its long arm can also be a source of employment, typically behind a false front. This is most appropriate in the case of military characters, who might be contacted by old associates from the War days who appeal to their patriotism and nostalgia to try and involve the veterans in some ILA-initiated operation. Another possibility, especially for those travelers in Reticulan space, is being caught in the middle of an ILA terrorist attack.

Chapter 2 – Aliens

“Popular opinion in the Republic would have you believe that our victory in the Terran Liberation War was due to the bravery of our soldiers, the strategic acumen of our generals, and President Singh’s unwavering leadership. As far as our patriotic spirit goes, this view does a fine job uplifting the spirit and bolstering our confidence. But history – as a science – must put forth the truth, regardless of whether it runs counter to public opinion. How did we, then, defeat the mighty Reticulan Empire?”

Yes, our soldiers were brave, our generals were cunning, and President Singh was an excellent leader. But had we faced a united and spirited Reticulan war effort, we would have lost the war and subsequently our freedom. But we never faced such a united enemy. The Reticulan Empire, despite its theoretical might, has three major weaknesses in war: Reticulan culture, which is less conducive to warfare than Terran culture; the Chiwak threat; and the most significant weakness: the internal contradictions of the Reticulan Empire that result in centrifugal forces that constantly threaten to pull the Empire apart.

First, as a rule, Reticulans make brilliant strategists, mediocre tacticians, and poor soldiers. This has a lot to do with their biology and evolutionary history, but even more significantly with their cultural characteristics. Reticulan heroes are scientists and engineers; since their antiquity, their leaders were always artisans and scholars, almost never warriors. Reticulan rationality and intellect allow them to formulate complex strategic plans – some of which outshine the brilliance of the most outstanding intellectual achievements in humanity’s military history. Once they set foot on the battlefield and enter the realm of operational-level tactics, the Reticulans lack the instincts and the socio-cultural constructs necessary for excellence in the face of the enemy. Humans and Cicek, on the other hand, excel at tactics and fight much better at this smaller scale. Reticulans try to compensate for this weakness – one they recognize all too well – by employing highly mechanized warfare techniques, by using warbots, and above all by using auxiliary troops comprised of alien species adept at war.

Second, the Chiwak are a constant military threat to the Reticulan Empire, and have been for centuries, perhaps millennia. In terms of fighting prowess, these feathered predators are the direct opposite of the Reticulans: the Chiwak are born and bred for war. Their Holy Dominion – an aggressive expansionist theocracy – seeks to place the entire Reticulan Empire under the Chiwak claw. The Reticulans enjoy technological superiority when facing the Chiwak, and employ many robots when combating them. They also employ more aggressive auxiliary troops in massive formations. Indeed, under the Reticulan occupation, millions of humans served as ground troops fighting for the Reticulans against the Chiwak Holy Dominion on distant worlds. Given the incessant threat of Chiwak invasion, when Terra rebelled, the Reticulan Empire could never divert its full resources to combatting the upstart Terrans, lest the Chiwak notice the weakness on their border and launch a major offensive.

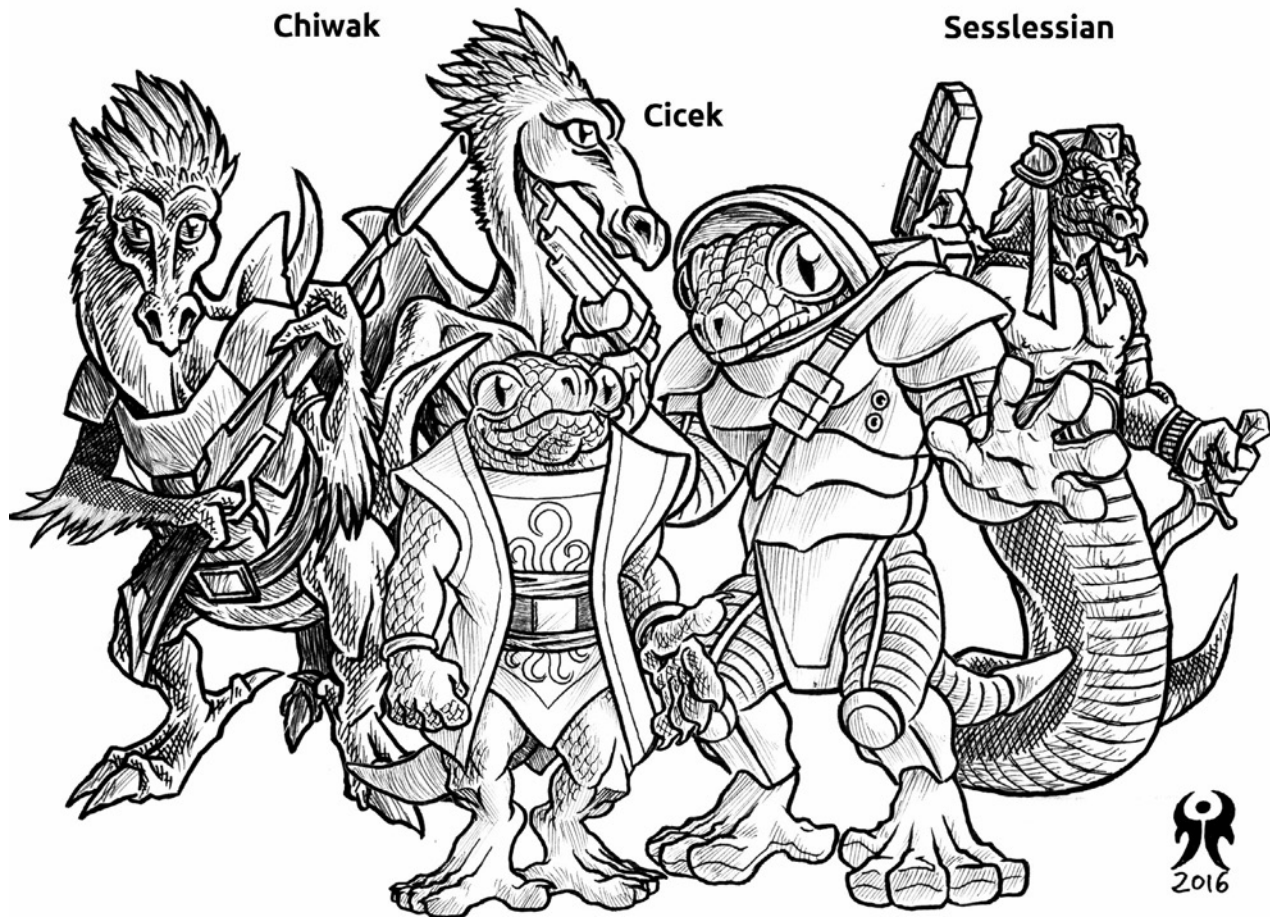
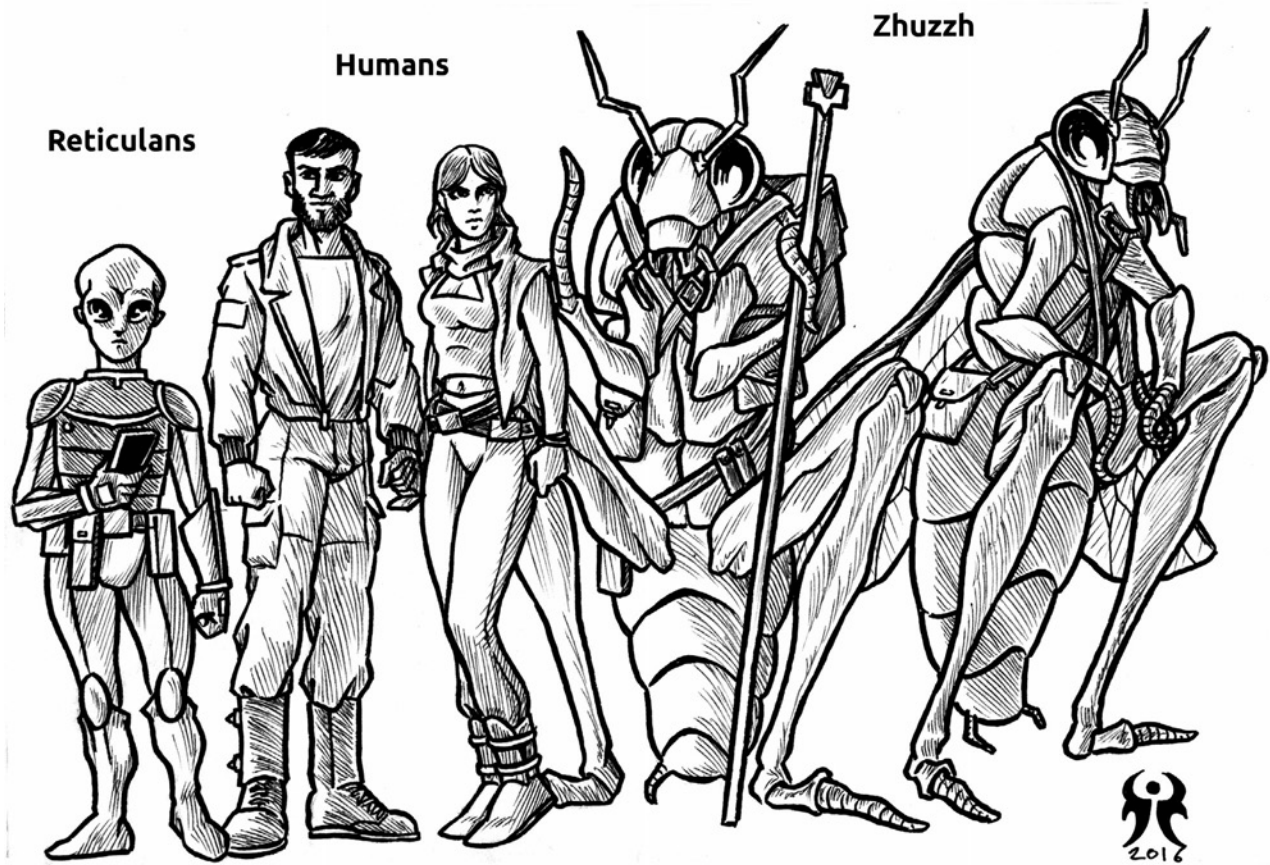
Third and most importantly, not all is well in the Reticulan Empire. On the surface, the Empire’s structure looks very stable. The Empress sits on top, ruling over nine Great Houses, who in turn control the Gentry, who lord over the commoner masses. Below all of this, one may find the Client Species, granted a certain level of autonomy but each a vassal of one Reticulan Great House. Each Reticulan knows her place and her function almost from birth; the only available avenue of social mobility is when a Commoner climbs the social ladder to join the ranks of the Gentry; beyond that, a Reticulan’s status depends on bloodline alone.

This stability comes at a price. Each Great House is a kingdom unto itself, highly autonomous, and engaged in constant competition with the other Great Houses. When House Thiragin’s thralls – the Terrans – rose up, the other Great Houses were content to let the Thiragin stew in their own pot, and lent little or no help to their ancestral rivals. Meanwhile, the Empress herself saw the revolt as House Thiragin’s own problem, of no concern to the central Imperial government. By the time the other Great Houses and the Empress realized the threat to the entire Reticulan Empire, Terra had already transformed itself into a military force to be reckoned with. Furthermore, the glass ceiling placed by hereditary nobility on true social mobility caused many of the more talented Gentry and Commoners to resent the Imperial social system where skill or merit did not determine rulership and status, but only by birth; thus, the Technocratic rebel movement began, and was quickly used by the Terrans as a weapon against the Empire’s war efforts. Finally, the Reticulan Houses often abused and exploited their Client Species; given the opportunities opened by the Terran revolt, many of them – especially many a Cicek tribe – were quick to throw off the Imperial yoke and support Terra.

Thus, like all great victories, ours is not only the product of our merit as warriors, but also of the historical circumstances surrounding the late era of the Reticulan Empire.”

- Prof. Vincent Aregai, preface to “History of the Terran War”, vol.1 pp.iii-iv, January 3rd, 2259

These Stars Are Ours!



These Stars Are Ours!

This chapter details the different alien species found in *These Stars Are Ours*, from the powerful Reticulan Empire, to the nomadic Zhuzzh and the anarchic Cicek tribes. These aliens and their empires can serve as Terra's rivals (the Reticulan Empire) or its allies (the Cicek) and its clients (the Ssesslessians and the Reticulan Technate), as well as neutral species of all sorts. There are also some more distant Reticulan client-species. We present all the major alien species with full details of their biology, psychology, society, and politics, and provide suggestions about playing a character of these species. Note that you can also find rules for generating and playing aliens of these species in Chapter 3, and their starships in Chapter 4.

"Major" and "Minor" Species

The distinction between "Minor" and "Major" Species is a Reticulan label. A "Major Species" in this setting is an intelligent species which either had a multiple-world polity when first encountered by the Reticulans - such as the Zhuzzh or the Chiwak - or, alternatively, an intelligent species which was biologically and culturally suitable for being organized into an interstellar client-state by the Reticulan conquerors, such as the Terrans and Cicek. The latter needed significant technological and cultural uplifting, but that process was a worthwhile investment for the Reticulans who employed the Cicek as shock troops. A "Minor Species" on the other hand, does not possess an interstellar polity and has some biological and/or cultural barrier preventing it from being organized into an Imperial client-state. This is one reason all "Major Species" are "air-breathers" - capable of surviving in typical Reticulan (or Terran) environments unaided or with minimal assistance.

The Reticulans: Empire and Technate



The Reticulan Empire is the oldest and most powerful polity in known space, though the Chiwak have been known to contest that claim. In any case, the importance of the Reticulans warrants a detailed discussion of the species, its culture and society, and its political and military structures.

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Biology

Reticulans are small, slender humanoids, standing on average 140cm tall. They possess large, bulbous heads dominated by two large, almond-shaped eyes. They have little or no nose and a small, toothy mouth. Reticulans exhibit both mammalian and reptilian characteristics. They have oily skin ranging from pale grey to brown in color but lack any sort of body hair; the skin of those Reticulans who have undergone Life Extension treatments usually turns green as a side effect of the regimen - hence the Terran slang term “Little Green Men” for the Reticulan ruling class. Reticulans have four digits per hand and foot – one thumb and three opposing fingers.

All Reticulans are biologically female. Each individual lays eggs several times in her life through parthenogenesis, each egg eventually producing a Reticulan hatchling. This form of reproduction requires no sexual contact with other individuals and creates less genetic variety than sexual reproduction, though the hatchlings are not exact clones of their mother (though they are quite like her). This superficial similarity among Reticulans led Terrans to hypothesize in the early years of the occupation that the Reticulans were all artificial clones. Interestingly, some xenobiological evidence, such as vestigial sexual reproductive organs in each Reticulan, suggests that at one point in the distant past the Reticulans reproduced sexually instead of, or in addition to, parthenogenesis. It is difficult to determine when in their evolution, the Reticulans lost the ability for sexual reproduction. Estimates range from some later point in their pre-sentience evolution, to early in their history as a sentient species. Furthermore, Reticulans live on average 150 years – decades more than most other species.

The implication of the lack of sexual reproduction among Reticulans is that all the social constructs based on sexual reproduction, such as family and love found in Humans are totally alien to Reticulans. The basic social unit among Reticulans is the mother and her daughters. Many trace their genetic “bloodline” back to a single progenitor mother. There is never a question of a Reticulan’s parentage: whoever laid the egg is the mother. This also means that a single healthy Reticulan can colonize a planet, after several generations.

Although they are not clones, Reticulans in the same bloodline are far more similar to each other genetically than humans, even humans of the same extended family. This should have made Reticulan medicine much simpler, as pharmaceuticals and procedures should have produced more predictable results than in the more genetically varied humans. It does render Reticulans much more susceptible to pathogens: if one Reticulan is vulnerable to the specific pathogen, all her bloodline risks being vulnerable as well, though this vulnerability is rarely complete.

Despite the above, medically treating a Reticulan is a difficult process. Their organs and metabolic processes are significantly more complex than those of humans and Reticulan medical problems often require advanced medical techniques to properly diagnose and handle. Low-tech medicine might complicate a Reticulan’s condition rather than help her. This curious fact, combined with the peculiar structure of several Reticulan metabolites, has led to the controversial hypothesis claiming that the Reticulan species underwent extensive genetic modification in its distant past.

Psychology, Culture, and Spirituality

Reticulan psychology is shaped by two main biological facts about their species. They reproduce asexually through parthenogenesis, and their evolutionary origins can be traced back to a scavenger species that ate prey long after predators had eaten their fill. The current theory is that these Reticulan ancestors never fought predators, or other hijackers. Instead, they waited for them to finish and then fed on the remains. This made the species poorly adapted to physical fighting. Moreover, asexual reproduction removed a reason to fight over mates. This meant that this Reticulan ancestor had even fewer evolutionary pressures forcing them to be efficient combatants. This in turn reduced evolutionary pressures to develop aggression and strong emotional passions. Rather, evolution drove the ancestor-Reticulan towards more cognitive development.

Tool use allowed the newly-sapient Reticulans to chase away predators from prey, get a bigger part of the carcass, and eventually learn to hunt and raise livestock. Still, the Reticulans remained poor fighters for most

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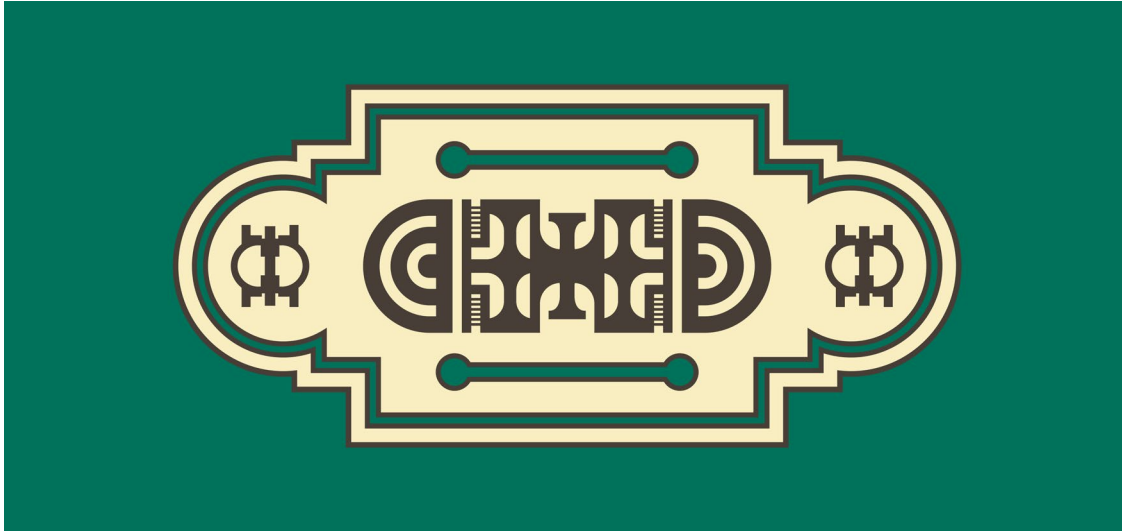
of their history, except when using machines to fight sporadic wars between nascent groups. Reticulans view tools and technology as the natural solution to any problem, and their rulers are typically “tool-makers”. In modern times, scientists, engineers, and entrepreneurs are rulers of Reticulan houses, rather than warriors. As a spacefaring civilization, Reticulans fight using robots, as well as alien auxiliary troops, and mercenaries. Reticulans can fight, and are brilliant strategists, but lack the killer instincts or muscle mass to be effective soldiers or tacticians.

Reticulans are very rational beings. The average Reticulan is smarter than the average human, and a particularly brilliant Reticulan outstrips even the greatest human geniuses in terms of raw cognitive power. Reticulans prefer to use their intellect, rather than emotions or brute force, to solve problems. They also have a fondness for categorizing and encoding information, as well as a knack for creating efficient procedures and plans. Relations between Reticulans are usually based on rational and utilitarian concerns. Still, it would be wrong to think the Reticulans incapable of emotion. Ambition and pride are common feelings among Reticulans, as is loyalty to one’s house or bloodline.

This inherent rationality leads to a Reticulan tendency towards a purely cerebral approach to life and philosophy. Reticulan culture, therefore, emphasizes contemplation and logic. Reticulan society is blessed with superb engineers, bright scientists, and sophisticated philosophers; they also excel in those fine arts that require sharpness of mind and keen observation. Their visual arts and musical forms are much less developed than those of other species. Reticulans, however, consider their engineering as a form of cerebral art: the making of a machine which is efficient, sleek, and rationally designed.

Reticulan religions also emphasize the rational. Most Reticulans follow one of two faiths: the contemplative Way and the monotheistic worship of the Great Engineer. The Way is a combination between an atheistic code and a spiritual belief system. It does not venerate a deity, but rather proposes methods and techniques for mental self-improvement towards enlightenment, mainly through meditation and mental exercise. Many Psions favor The Way, as they see it as a means to hone their psychic powers. The Way is also popular among Reticulan pilots and gunners who can benefit from The Way’s mental acuity and clarity. Other Reticulans worship the Great Engineer, a transcendental monotheistic deity. The Church of the Great Engineer posits that the universe is a highly complex machine, and thus requires the existence of a Great Engineer. This deity laid down his principles - the Rules of the Universe - in ancient Reticulan religious texts mainly concerned with astronomy and mathematics. Worship includes a great amount of study and contemplation, as the faithful believe that the more one understands the Universal Machine, the closer one gets to the Engineer and to divine clarity. For reasons unknown even to Reticulan Great Engineer priestesses, despite all living and known historic Reticulans being egg-laying females, the Engineer is a male figure. This strange fact has led to much speculation both by the Reticulans themselves and by other species, chief among them the Terrans. One speculation claims that this male figure represents an older alien species with whom the Reticulans had contact in their distant past – a species possessing sexual reproduction and led by males. Another speculation posits that the Reticulan species once had two sexes and reproduced sexually instead, or in addition to, parthenogenesis. How the hypothetical male Reticulans disappeared is a tough question, and this undermines such theories.

Note, however, that the Exalted Order of Fomalhaut was not a Reticulan faith, but rather a pro-Reticulan Terran faith which venerated the Reticulans and their culture.



The Reticulan Empire

The Reticulan Empire is ruled by the Empress and the Great Houses. Each Great House, as well as many of the Minor Houses, is essentially a massive semi-monopolist megacorporation, not unlike the Zaibatsus of Imperial Japan on Old Terra. The Great Houses, however, have a great deal of political influence. Each House is ruled by a single Reticulan bloodline, and ownership is hereditary. At the most basic level, the Empire is not necessarily feudal since its rulers are not a class of land-owners. Instead, it is more like highly stratified and monopolized capitalism: each House owns a wide variety of subsidiaries, industries, and outlets, and has the right to govern planets, or even subsectors. As communications are limited to the speed of Jump travel, each planetary business, even when owned by an interstellar Great House, must run itself almost independently. Thus, the ruling bloodline guards its House's interests over interstellar distances by extreme nepotism: the entire senior managerial staff comes from its daughters.

There are nine Great Houses. Each controls one-ninth of the “periphery” - essentially one Subsector in official Reticulan terminology. The Imperial House controls the central Subsector of the Empire. Minor Houses do not rule over territory, but rather control a specific economic or scientific niche with a hereditary monopoly or semi-monopoly. As a side note, Free Traders also have their place in the Reticulan economy, as highly ossified monopolies cannot always cater to every need of multiple disparate planets.

Each Great House has its own military, and the Empress expects each House to defend its Subsector on its own. The Empress controls the multi-species Imperial Legions and the formidable Imperial Fleets. These two forces are the two tools she uses to keep the Houses in line, as well as take care of emergencies that the local Houses cannot deal with. The most recent of such an emergency was the upstart Terran revolt that soundly defeated House Thiragin. The Imperial Legions and Fleet are usually stationed in the Core and the Chiwak border, though some squadrons patrol the Periphery to show the flag and remind the Houses who is in charge. Usually, House troops and alien auxiliaries first meet any foreign invasion. Imperial forces will intervene only as a last resort, because the Empress is loath to weaken her forces in war lest the Great House start stepping out of line.

While a member of one House or another (that is, a Noble) rules each planet in the Empire, the actual government varies, since not all nobles will rule in the same way. –The Imperial ideal of planetary administration is a Feudal Technocracy; however, some rulers take a more direct role, while others let their servants run things for them; sometimes the world is split between several Houses and sometimes the ruling family governs directly rather than turning day-to-day operations over to a proper corporate subsidiary.

Reticulan Imperial society has two glass ceilings: a “soft” one above Social Standing 10, and a “hard” one above Social Standing 12. There is relatively good social mobility up to Social Standing 10, as the fortunes of an individual Reticulan may rise or fall per business or scientific success or failure. Social Standing 11 and 12 are the

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Gentry: the lower ranks of the Reticulan upper class. The Gentry is not a fully hereditary class. A Prole may rise into the Gentry due to outstanding success or merit, but failure could force Gentry members to fall from their position and become commoners.

All Proles in the territory of a Great House are its subjects. Many work for the House controlling the area they live in - as said above, it is essentially a monopolistic corporation. If commoners move - not always an easy thing to do - to the territory of another Great House, they'll usually have to find a job with that house. The Proles constitute a clear majority of the Reticulan species and fill all productive and most contemplative jobs. They also staff the lower and middle managerial positions, with the Gentry functioning as senior managers and the Nobility as executives. Economic prosperity and status vary greatly between Proles, but the one thing in common between them is their lack of any significant political power, as the decision makers are, for the most part, Nobles.

Above the Gentry are the actual hereditary Nobles. A Social Standing of 13-14 corresponds to the Minor Houses and the psionic Priesthood; A Reticulan at Social Standing 15 is considered to belong to one of the Major Houses. Finally, Social Standing 16 refers to the Imperial Household, which is also psionic. The ruling circles of each House, including that of the Imperial Household and the Priestesses, consist of a single bloodline. Note that Life Extension Technology is available only to the Upper Gentry and the Nobility: Social Standing 12 or higher.

The combination of strict hereditary Noble bloodlines and Life Extension treatments being available only to the ruling elite has made much of Reticulan society stagnant. No matter how badly or often a Noble fails in her tasks, she remains a Noble, and most likely stays that way for centuries, due to her artificially-extended life-span. No matter how old the ideas of a Noble or Gentry scientist or philosopher are, she will remain at her prestigious and influential post. Business managers and ranking Imperial military officers will often stay in their posts for centuries, even if they are not particularly successful. This inherent stagnation is the main failing of Reticulan society. It is because of this stagnation at the upper levels that the much smaller and poorer United Terran Republic was victorious against the mighty Reticulan Empire.

Aliens in the Empire

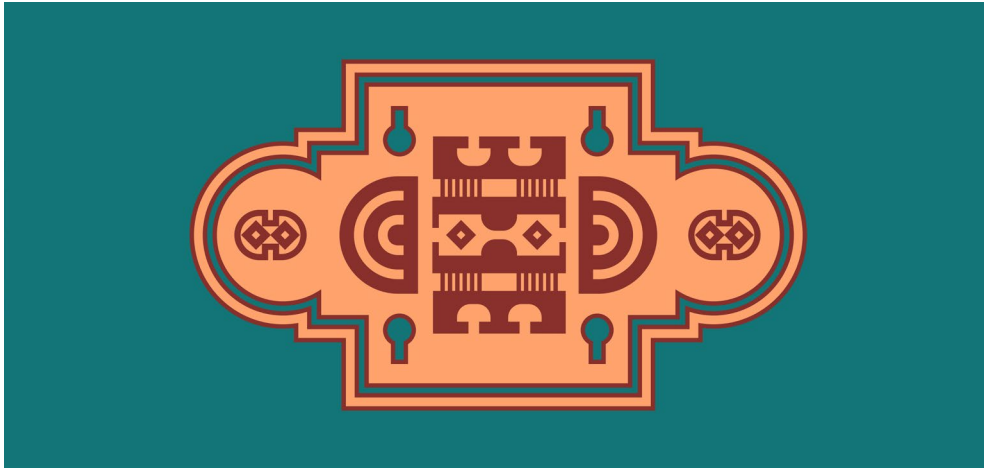
The Reticulan Empire rules over several client species. A Great House will control all client species within their subsector, though some of the Great Houses do not control clients, or at least do not do so anymore - such as House Thiragin and House Ziluna, who used to control Humanity and the Cicek, respectively. But other species such as the Klax, Phnunk, Fanja-Kanja, part of the Ssesslessians, some of the Zhuzzh and even a handful of Cicek loyalists, remain clients of the Reticulan Empire.

Typically, a Great House affords its clients a certain degree of limited autonomy, but every client species government has innumerable Reticulan "advisors" present to ensure that policy is in line with Imperial diktat. The Reticulan Empire demands tribute in resources and industrial work, as well as research work. And of course, each client species must supply a large levy of auxiliary troop conscripts for Reticulan war efforts.

In Reticulan Imperial society, aliens occupy a subservient social role, inferior even to Reticulan Proles. At best, an alien can reach an equivalent position to a lower-middle-class Reticulan Prole. Because all the client species are exploited economically and militarily and their members openly treated as second-class subjects of the Empire, it was no surprise that Terra called for a universal insurrection against the Imperial masters. What was more surprising to the Reticulans was just how many answered that call.

Today, only some of the former clients remain under Reticulan rule. Even those have gained a somewhat improved status within the Empire, as the specter of a renewed client rebellion backed by Terran gunboats haunts the Reticulan Empire.

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The Reticular Technate

Imperial society, in all its fossilized glory, operates against the rational senses of many Reticulans. For many decades - some would say centuries - Reticulan Commoners with scientific and technical abilities grew increasingly dissatisfied with the Imperial system. In hushed voices, they discussed the rationally necessary change: the replacement of the aristocratic Empire with a highly meritocratic scientifically-managed state. For centuries, however, the Imperial system was strong enough to prevent these dissidents from taking any concrete action against the Empire. Then Terra rebelled.

Emboldened by Terran military achievements in the Terran Liberation War and assisted by CRC intelligence networks, the Technocratic movement grew from a disparate discussion-network of dissidents to an underground political organization. They began carrying out sabotage and espionage operations against the Empire, and building a political base among the general Reticulan population. These dissidents were strongest in the Coreward

Longevity Treatments

The Longevity Treatment is a one-time medical treatment, requiring several weeks of immersion in a life-support tank, which halts the Reticulan's aging for up to three centuries. This treatment is monstrously expensive and thus only available to the upper Gentry and to the Nobility in the Empire. The Technate views a long-lived ruling class as inefficient and inflexible, and thus eschews such treatment. There are no known cases of Terrans – or the members of any other non-Reticulan species for that matter – receiving the treatment.

Rumors of all kinds and types surround these mysterious treatments. The Reticulan Empire keeps tight lips on this subject and many non-Reticulans – and even most Reticulan Proles – are intrigued by the unexplained technology. Events during the War greatly expanded the rumor mill on this subject. Despite Reticulan efforts to destroy such installations before the Terrans could take them, Terran and Technate forces managed to capture a few Longevity Treatment facilities in relatively good shape. The Reticulans managed to erase the facilities' datafiles, but the troops still found various devices and preparations.

Chief among those devices were canisters of a mysterious green liquid – identical to canisters discovered in various Reticulan laboratories performing vivisections on human abductees. This liquid contained traces of human DNA strands, giving rise to all sorts of dark rumors. Some claim that the Reticulans impregnated female human abductees and then harvested their fetuses for stem cells, while others say that this has something to do with Reticulan experimentation on human subjects. These treatments were available prior to the Reticulan conquest of Terra, and thus could definitely be made without involving Terran biology; however, rumors claim that using Terran subjects or materials greatly expedites the process and reduces the costs involved in this treatment. The Keid archives did not contain any direct data about these treatments, nor did any of the Reticulan scientists who defected to the Technate know the details of this treatment. Conspiracy theories abound.

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Pre-conquest Reticulan presence on Terra

For almost two centuries prior to the Reticulan conquest of Earth, rumors circulated on humanity's homeworld about alien visitors and the abduction of human beings and animals by these extraterrestrial visitors. For decades, Terran authorities denied such allegations. But when the Reticulans invaded, the truth came out: while such visits were much rarer than the rumors claimed, a few Reticulan scouts did explore the Earth prior to official first contact. Moreover, a few did crash-land on Terra. In some cases, Reticulans did "collect" live "samples" of humans and other Terran life.

During the EFA days, the old Roswell airbase in North America and the Kapustin Yar base in Eastern Europe, where old Earth authorities did hold some samples of crashed Reticulan scout-craft, served as Museums of Our Alien Beneficiaries and their Exploration of Earth. After the UTR declared independence, they became the Museums of Reticulan Invasion and Oppression of Humanity.

parts of the Empire, closer to the Terran lines. When Terran troops conquered Reticulan worlds, the Technocrats soon came forth to welcome the Terrans as liberators. The Technocrats would eventually replace Terran military rule and fully governed their worlds. In 2252, they established the Reticulan Technate, uniting several Terran-controlled Reticulan worlds under a single, independent - at least officially - Reticulan government.

The Technate combines rational and scientific management of society and the economy with a highly meritocratic and hierarchic social order. The Technocratic movement supports full meritocratic social mobility up to the Chamber of Science, the Technate's 12-member "head of state" body. In the modern Technate of 2260, social mobility is often a matter of passing exams, and later in life demonstrating outstanding achievements in science, engineering, or business to review boards. One could say that the Technate operates like a well-managed corporation, with advancement according to merit and achievement. Major failures can cause a Technate citizen to be demoted down the social ladder, even if she is a member of the Chamber of Science. Social rank in the Technate grants significant rewards, but more than anything it provides its holder with authority to direct larger parts of society and the economy. There is significant incentive to retain one's standing in the system and advance further, leading to high efficiency.

This system has one major flaw in comparison to the Empire, and that flaw is instability. The Reticulan Empire was – and still is for the most part – a highly stable society capable of surviving almost any crisis without much economic or political disruption. Long-living Nobles take the long view and plan for the long run – and then are around and in power for centuries to implement this plan. By contrast, the far more dynamic Technate promotes a far more short-term view, and various administrators change positions often, reducing the stability of the government and its plans. Furthermore, a meritocracy means that failure leads to sanctions or even to loss of position and status. This leads many Reticulans in the Technate to be much more careful and less ambitious with their plans and projects to reduce the risks of failure; in the Empire, on the other hand, Nobles could rely on their life-long position to plan and execute very ambitious projects. There is a small number of Reticulan Nobles who do support the Technocratic movement. Even though they have undergone longevity treatments, the Technate subjects them to the same meritocratic system as any other Reticulan, making office conditional on merit rather than establishing the same office-holders for centuries, as was the case in the Empire.

The Technocratic movement developed for many decades or perhaps centuries prior to the War – or so the Technate claims – and thus had a fully-formed system of government, at least on paper, prior to the War. This allowed the Technate to quickly establish its regime once Technocratic revolt backed by Terran guns drove the Empire away from the Technate worlds.

The Technate is much smaller and weaker than the old Empire. However, it receives military aid and protection from the UTR and the treaty between Terra and the Empire guarantees Technate independence. Terran media portrays the Technate as a revolutionary and independent Reticulan state, while Imperial society views it as a Terran satellite under a puppet government. Reality is somewhere in between these extremes. While the

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Terran military has complete freedom of movement and action through Technate space, and Terran advisors are attached to various administrative bodies in the Technate, the Reticulan Technate government determines a major part of its policy independently. Moreover, the Technate maintains its own military, armed with salvaged Imperial arms and Terran supplies.

Reticulan Military

As discussed above, Reticulans make brilliant strategists, mediocre tacticians, and poor soldiers due to their evolution, physiology, and culture. –Because of this, Reticulans prefer to use engines of war and other technological tools in warfare rather than rely on Reticulan soldiers' training, abilities, and elan. In modern wars, this has meant resorting to highly mechanized warfare, using advanced warbots, and conscripting client-species auxiliaries.

Reticulan warfare is tech-intensive: troops receive expensive, technologically advanced weapons and armor, with a high proportion of energy weapons. – Reticulan forces are supported by advanced robotics, combat walkers, and close-support grav-saucers. Reticulans favor combined arms warfare, usually with close-in air-support, tripod support walkers, and warbots integrated at the battalion level, and sometimes even down to the platoon level. Reticulans prefer precise fire support, such as smart orbital lasers and advanced ground-attack grav-craft, over barrage artillery such as the ubiquitous L-601 "Larissa" missile-tanks favored by Terran forces. Auxiliary troops tend to have simpler equipment, and typically slug-throwers in place of lasers, but they still enjoy high-tech support and advanced communication.

The Reticulan Imperial naval doctrine emphasizes the use of fast, lightly-armored ships carrying energy weapons. They rarely use missiles due to the logistics involved. They also invest in stealth systems, advanced computers, and good sensors on most of their craft, sometimes even at the expense of armament. The Reticulan navy is a carrier navy, employing carriers of various sizes carrying the universal 30-ton Military Saucers used for anything from dogfighting to troop transport. A light carrier battlegroup includes a single 1,000-ton Light Carrier supported by three to five 300-ton Frigates, and typically three 100-ton Reticulan Scouts. A heavy carrier battlegroup includes a 5,000-ton Mothership and its attendant craft. Reticulans attack using Military Saucer swarms with the carrier and frigates using their heavier long-range weapons in a supporting role.

Each Reticulan Great House maintains its own military force, called "Huscarls" in Terran parlance. The Great Houses typically draw heavily on auxiliaries from their client species; in pre-Liberation War times, this means that House Thiragin employed large formations of human conscripts, while House Ziluna employed large numbers of Cicek. During the War, both above-mentioned houses faced the rebellion of their human auxiliaries and part of their Cicek troops, and had to employ many warbots to compensate. House Thiragin also had to recruit Cicek and Ssesslessian troops which it had not deployed in the past, to compensate for the loss of their Terran war-thralls. The Great Houses also maintain their own navies, since Reticulan tradition requires each Great House to wage its own private wars, unless they affect the entire Empire.

The Empress herself has two options when she mobilizes a military force. The first is demanding that the Great Houses lend their troops for the Imperial war effort. This has the advantage - from the Empress' perspective - of letting someone else's forces do the dirty work without putting more expensive Imperial troops in harm's way. This does entail a political cost in the Imperial political game between the Empress and the Great Houses, as it places the Empress at a disadvantage by allowing the Great Houses to earn prestige at her expense. The other option is using the Imperial Legion. This elite force is the Empress' whip used to keep the Great Houses in line. The mere threat of unleashing this military force usually is enough to put an upstart Great House in its place. But using the Legion also does have a cost. War, after all, causes attrition to a force, and when the Legion suffers significant losses, it weakens the Empress' power over the Great Houses. Thus, the Empress must always use her forces carefully, avoiding over-involvement in Great House affairs, all the while maintaining the balance of power in the Empire, keeping herself in control of the Great Houses.

The defeat of the Reticulan Empire by the United Terran Republic caused a ripple effect in Reticulan society

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as well as in its military that are still being felt today. It is now clear to most Reticulan military leaders that against a determined opponent such as the Terran-Cicek alliance, the decentralized military structure of the Empire hampers effective military intervention. It further provides the enemy with time to build its strengths and consolidate its holdings. The Empress is now pushing for a more unified Reticulan Imperial military, possibly creating a system of standardized Legions in parallel to the Empress Own Legion. The Great Houses, of course, are very circumspect about the Empress' motives. They do understand the necessity of a more unified and rational military command structure, but this would entail giving up much of their power and autonomy to the Empress. Time will tell what kind of change will come, and at what political price.

Playing a Reticulan

When playing a Reticulan, always try to be as rational as possible. A Reticulan character may have emotions, but her reasoning abilities should always be at the fore. A Reticulan character keeps a cool head and a sharp mind even in stressful situations. When trying to solve a problem, she will resort to scientific and technological solutions before turning to emotion, intuition, or violence. Reticulans view violence as only one of several tools in their disposal when confronting problems. They wield it as a scalpel, not as a sledgehammer, but when they see fit they are capable of things which would be viewed as vicious cruelty by other species. When they do resort to violence, Reticulans prefer to carry it out via technological means, such as robots, or their alien clients - they themselves are not very well-adapted to combat.

Reticulans lack the biological or cultural imperative for love, other than motherly love. They may form friendships with other individuals - even alien individuals - but these relations are rarely passionate, and carry only moderate emotional attachment. They may display loyalty, but will rarely adhere to what they see as a lost cause. They are capable of compassion, but less so than most humans. In interpersonal relations, just like in problem-solving, Reticulans tend towards rationality and utilitarianism. Furthermore, Reticulans are long-lived, and their upper class is extremely long-lived. This leads to them embracing "the long view" in all their endeavors. Reticulan villains might spend decades or even centuries on elaborate schemes. At all times, Reticulans are calculating and very rarely do they make a rash decision.

Reticulan Terminology

Terra has been a Reticulan client-state and an integral part of Reticulan Imperial society for 150 years. Therefore, much of the terminology related to space travel and interstellar activity used by the Reticulan Empire now serves the United Terran Republic in its translated form. After abortive attempts to "Terra-nize" the terminology in 2232-2233, the Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel, as well as the Ministry of War, understood that this terminology was too deeply ingrained in spacer practice to allow replacement by native terms. And thus, even today, the UTR uses direct translations of Reticulan terms to describe a wide range of subjects.

One example of this is the division of space into Sectors and Subsectors. The Reticulans call the area of space they control, as well as the major part of Chiwak frontier – roughly 40 by 32 parsecs – a "Sector", and divided it into sixteen "Subsectors", typically each corresponding to a given client species. Reticulans also use the parsec as their standard measurement for interstellar distance, rather than the light year previously used by Terrans. This preference still exists in Terran astrography to this very day. The same goes to the standard classification of worlds, which Terrans refer to as "UWP" – the Universal World Profile, which even includes a rough standardization of starport types. Another artifact of Reticulan rule is the use of Galactic directions: Coreward, Rimward, Spinward, and Trailing. The UTR tried to implement Terra-centric coordinates in their stead, but these were never widely adopted by astrogators.

Reticulans love rational and efficient coding, so they code each person's basic characteristics into a short string of Reticulan symbols, which Terrans have translated into numbers and letters. They even coded the measurements of a person's aptitudes and social class into a six-symbol string for efficient processing in various aptitude certifications. Similarly, Reticulans register certified job skills on a rational scale where 0 is basic training, 1 is a base-level employable skill, and 3 is professional-level certification.

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The same type of coding applies to starships as well, including the tendency to classify ship types by one symbol – translated by Terrans into a letter; a light merchant, for example, is Type-A, while a patrol corvette is Type-C. Another Reticulan classification system is that of starship drives, with standardized drive model notations used

The Imperial Legion

The Imperial Legion is the Empress' sword and shield. The Legion is an elite combined arms force with a unified, independent command structure. It includes both naval and ground forces equipped with advanced technology - in game terms, on the cusp of TL14. The Legion is also a multi-species force. Any sentient being who is not a Reticulan may enlist in the Legion. Reticulans who wish to join may serve only in the highest echelons of command, and are hand-picked by the Imperial Household to avoid possible conflicts of loyalty. The Legion is designed to be a force loyal to the Imperial Household alone - an alien force is by its very essence external to Reticulan politics and thus much more reliable for the Empress. The Legion accepts only the best; once accepted, the recruit signs for twenty years in Her Imperial Majesty's service and undergoes extensive cybernetic and biological modifications. The training regimen is so grueling that only some of the recruits survive, let alone pass. One of the main enticements for joining the Legion is a full erasure of the recruit's past; every recruit's record is expunged, making the Legion a common choice for violent criminals and other ne'er do-wells. Those who survive twenty years retire with a comfortable retirement fund, and of course retain their extensive modifications.

The most elite of this elite army are the Immortal Cohorts – small units of soldiers brought from the brink of death (or as the rumors claim – from death itself) by advanced cybernetic surgery. More machine than an organic being, the Empress keeps these bio-mechanical horrors in suspended animation between battles – thus making them useful for decades, if not centuries, of warfare.

for centuries. During the Liberation War, a coalition of Terran ship-building corporations proposed dropping this notation, but the old system remained in place to maintain compatibility with legacy systems, as well as to avoid the creation of proprietary drive standards monopolized by specific Terran corporations, which would have considerably raised the cost of starships.

The UTR also retained most Reticulan production standards, as well as computer and software standards. The Terran standard "Solar Wind" operation system is a simplified version of the standard Reticulan operating system adapted to touch-screen controls instead of the more expensive Reticulan holographic interface; both share the same data structure. In almost all cases, Reticulan and Terran devices, datafiles, and even slug-thrower ammunition are fully compatible.





Cicek Confederation

A large part of the Cicek species comprise Terra's closest allies, and were instrumental for victory in the Terran Liberation War. Anarchic but heroic, aggressive but intelligent, they are very common in and around Terran space, both as traders, mercenaries, explorers - and in many cases also smugglers and pirates.

Biology

The Cicek are bipedal, warm-blooded aliens with strong reptilian characteristics and a few avian ones. The commonly held theory is that they evolved from arboreal or cliff-dwelling carnivorous pouncers native to Alpha Mensae c. Fossil records indicate that the Cicek "ur-species" weighed approximately 60kg and was 1.5 meters long, with a long tail; like the modern Cicek, it had adhesion pads on its toes and fingers, allowing for effective climbing. The body of a modern Cicek is covered with gentle scales of a color ranging from green to reddish-yellow. The jaws and teeth are well-developed for killing prey and tearing its flesh. Cicek eyes are highly developed, with slit pupils, and the Cicek have excellent night-vision. Cicek have five fingers on each hand and foot, with opposed thumbs like those of humans, as well as adhesive pads and a sharp talon on each finger. They walk on their two hind legs in a slightly stooped manner and like to cling to vertical surfaces such as trees, large rocks, or starship hulls when resting. Cicek also show strong sexual dimorphism - the female weighs on average 70kg, and is approximately 160cm tall, not including a meter-long tail. She is much smaller than the 120kg male, in all its 190cm or even 200cm glory.

The Cicek reproductive cycle would be familiar to any Terran zoologist. Female Cicek lay one or two eggs

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approximately two months after mating, typically attaching them to a surface in a warm, dark place. The eggs hatch within six more months. Newly hatched Cicek can crawl and climb immediately upon hatching, walk within four months of hatching, and speak within one year after hatching. Cicek hatchlings readily eat ground or crushed food, and may eat regular solid food at the age of six to nine months; traditionally, the mother or her tribe-mates would chew the food then feed it to the hatchlings, but modern society employs various mechanical methods for hatchling-food preparation. Cicek mature quickly and reach adulthood around the age of 14. If they survive the constant violence of Cicek society, and given access to modern medical care, they may live up to the age of 100.

Cicek are omnivorous, though they have a strong preference for meat, as well as soft, sweet fruits. They do have impressive teeth and claws, well-adapted to predation. Cicek can easily eat and digest most Terran foodstuffs, except for dairy products. Cicek who become particularly fond of Terran dairy products will sometimes even undergo gene therapy to add the ability to digest dairy to their digestive systems. Originally Cicek were nocturnal, but have since adapted to modern lighting and even to diurnal cycles, especially after conquest by the Reticulans and the introduction of interstellar travel and artificial lighting.

Psychology and Society

The overriding social instinct of the Cicek ur-species was very different among males and females. Females were social, tolerated each other, and cooperated in hunting. Males were highly antagonistic towards each other, and extremely territorial; they would try to kill each other on sight. When climate change and the introduction of larger prey into their habitat forced them into social units larger than a single male and his harem of several females, the males had to conquer their instinctive antagonism towards each other to cooperate. So Cicek culture, especially regarding males, revolves around mitigating this aggression. This has been more-or-less accomplished through constant competition and very elaborate and highly ritualized systems of honor which evolved during early sentience to prevent cannibalism between the males of the same tribe. Despite all of this, the modern Cicek male sees all other males as rivals; culture teaches him how to channel this rivalry into (usually) non-lethal avenues, such as competing for honor and duels which are (usually) not fought to the death. However, at his most basic impulse, a Cicek male feels nothing but aggression towards any other Cicek male.

Female and male social systems work very differently. Cicek males work towards accumulating Glory: the social “currency” of showing one’s superiority and besting competitors in a manner visible to all. Male social organization is hierarchical, with the weaker male submitting to the stronger male, while always looking for an opportunity to best him and take his place. The dominant male sees his male subordinates as both a resource and a threat. This is not just a physical competition, but also a social one: if a subordinate gains significantly more Glory than his superior, he will replace him, possibly without a serious fight. In battle, heroic and daring conduct earns the Cicek male much Glory, and so does honorably defeating other Cicek in duels. In business, driving out competitors and amassing wealth earns Glory. The best way for a Cicek male to earn Glory from economic prowess, however, is by throwing feasts and giving gifts; to give a gift which the recipient cannot reciprocate with an equivalent gift shows superiority and humiliates the recipient. Wealth in a bank account, on the other hand, may mean much to the Cicek businessman interested in economic expansion, but grants little Glory by itself.

Cicek female society is far less competitive, and far more egalitarian. A female sees her female tribe-mates as sisters, not as rivals. Females think of the good of their tribe first, and only after that will they consider their own well-being. Males, on the other hand, think of their own position in the ever-changing male hierarchy and only then of the good of their tribe. Even today, Cicek possess somewhat differentiated economic and social systems for both sexes, competitive for males and cooperative for females.

This leads to the modern Cicek society being, in practice, a matriarchy. Males may take the lead in war and in entrepreneurial business, but anything requiring a vision of the “bigger picture” and long-term planning beyond the current short-term scheme to gain Glory has a group of females behind it. Females manage the ordinary affairs of tribal government, from infrastructure to education. They also carry out various works of production and engineering useful for the entire tribe but not profitable or dynamic enough to satisfy the male need for business Glory. In many cases, the females draw and execute the tribe’s long-range plans. Females have little

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desire for individual glory-seeking enterprises, while males see the day-to-day management of society and infrastructure as boring and inglorious, and thus both satisfy different societal needs. This is a major factor in the resilience of Cicek society, as it enjoys both the stability and wider viewpoint of a planned economy, run by females, and the dynamism and adaptability of a highly competitive market fought over by males. In war, females deal with coordination and wider strategy while males excel in tactics.

Cicek, however, do not treat humans according to their sex – as humans have less sexual dimorphism than Cicek – but according to their behavior. They might consider a male human team-player to be part of “female” culture, while Cicek males might have an urge to compete with an individualist, competitive human female as with a Cicek male. This treatment, however, is not as strong as that among Cicek, as, still, they are aliens – and not part of the Cicek tribal system with its various codes of behavior and male pecking orders.

Cicek mating rituals are very casual and carry little long-term attachment. Females will readily mate with any Alpha male - those on the top of the hierarchy - and somewhat less frequently with his subordinates. As the Alpha male often changes, the new Alpha will gain the priority in mating. It is thus impossible to determine who is a Cicek’s father: the mother may have mated with several males beforehand. While modern genetic testing can easily answer this question, Cicek society strongly frowns on such practice. The mother raises her offspring, while sharing part of that burden with the entire tribe – including its male members, any of which might be the youngster’s father.

Until only a few centuries ago, the Cicek were a TL1 tribal society. The entire population of their homeworld was bound into tribes of a few thousand Cicek each. The Cicek possessed crude metalworking techniques and were semi-nomadic pastoral herders. But then the Reticulans came: aliens who’d rather see others fight for them, than fight themselves. To the Reticulans, the 120-kg Cicek male, in all his predatory might and Glory-seeking temper, was the perfect shock-trooper to fight Reticulan wars. Thus, the Reticulans - particularly House Ziluna - “uplifted” the Cicek, providing high-tech weapons and equipment to friendly tribes in return for recruiting Cicek auxiliaries.

Of course, this uplifting has had a profound impact on Cicek society. Other species, such as Terrans and Reticulans, had gone through millennia of cultural evolution to support increasingly complex social forms and collective identities; the Cicek have encountered modern technology without any cultural or social development. The Cicek are still strongly tribal, and have trouble forming larger collective identities. Concepts such as “nation” or “Cicek-Kind” mean little to them, even though both Reticulans and Terrans have tried to introduce these ideas into Cicek society. The modern Cicek is typically very loyal to his or her tribe, but feels very little affinity to any larger Cicek body, such as the Cicek Confederation, or even to the whole species. The introduction of modern technology also meant that within a few years, the surviving tribes on the Cicek homeworld were using tanks and plasma guns to fight wars which, only a short while before, were fought using bronze axes and composite bows. The homeworld became a very dangerous place indeed. To escape the bloodshed, many Cicek tribes got their hands-on starships (bought from Reticulan traders) and emigrated to far-away stars. The fractured nature of the species also meant that very soon, the Reticulans had only partial control over the Cicek tribes. Cicek mercenaries and pirates rapidly became very common all over known space.

Culture and Spirituality

As discussed, the Cicek are highly tribal in nature and their society is highly fragmented. There are thousands of Cicek languages, each having developed from a specific region of origin on the Cicek homeworld. To control modern Cicek society, the Reticulans created the Trade Tongue: a creole language which almost all Cicek now speak. When Reticulans or Terrans learn the “Cicek Language” they almost always learn the Trade Tongue. Otherwise, one would have to study a vast array of dialects. Some Cicek have used this to their advantage, and will only speak their tribal dialect when no aliens are present. Those aliens who do learn a tribal dialect are almost always adopted members of the tribe.

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Like language, Cicek culture varies between tribes. While the basic social characteristics regarding males and females exist in all Cicek cultures, the particulars change from tribe to tribe. Culture in general tends to follow the regular sexual dimorphism: Male art and other cultural products always have a competitive component to it; its primary goal is to impress or humiliate other males and thus gain Glory. Females tend to be more collaborative in artistic undertakings. Great works of engineering, as well as most literature, are products of female effort; males will build engineering projects only to impress other Cicek and write prose or poetry only when in competition with other males doing so, while females practice such arts and artisanship for the benefit of their own tribe.

As for religion, there are as many faiths as there are Cicek tribes. In most cases, these beliefs can be categorized as animist or polytheist, though some tribes prefer to worship their legendary ancestors. Males tend to view religion as a way to gain favors and Glory in the eyes of gods and spirits, while females tend to worship gods or spirits viewed as protectors of their tribes.



The Cicek Confederation

The most relevant and cohesive unit of Cicek society is the tribe, typically numbering several thousand Cicek. Under a charismatic female leader or more commonly a Glorious male war-leader, several tribes might unite into a wider community. However, such social structures seldom last longer than their leaders. In some occasions, such as during the Terran War, a great war-leader will accumulate enough Glory to unite a significant part of the Cicek species under his charismatic leadership. Four Talons was such a Cicek male leader, and he led most Cicek tribes in a bloody war against the Reticulans.

At first, motivated by their grand Republicanist vision, their Terran allies tried to organize the Cicek tribes led by Four Talons into a “republic” of sort, with all the attendant civic institutions and a Grand Assembly. Predictably, this imposed political contraption split along tribal lines. Instead, Four Talons and his female advisors devised a system of government more amenable to Cicek culture: the Cicek Confederation.

Under this system, each tribe maintains its autonomy and remains a sovereign state all on its own. The Confederation, however, allows the disparate tribes to coordinate their actions in matters related to their common interests. This creates cooperative systems for improved negotiation with alien powers, a postal system, and military coordination. This system requires both male and *especially* female leaders. A strong male warlord can, by his Glory, force the highly individualistic Alpha males to cooperate in business and military matters. Economic coordination, postal services, and any other cooperative venture that goes on in the Confederation, on the other hand, are the responsibility of Cicek females looking out for the mutual interests of their tribes.

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When Four Talons met his heroic end during the invasion of Keid, the female administrators in charge of the Confederation managed to keep the government running even though the male next down the hierarchy, Eyes Ablaze, was less talented in large-scale military leadership than his predecessor. The female-only Council keeps the Confederation running, and even ensures that Eyes Ablaze has significant military influence. At the end of the War, the Cicek tribes each went in their own ways and demobilized most of the forces; now the Confederation makes sure that in case of another war, Eyes Ablaze may still call upon enough tribes to defend Cicek space. The Confederation's administrative system, almost exclusively female, works hard to minimize and mitigate the inevitable infighting between Cicek tribes in the absence of a major external threat. For the most part, they are successful – though there is always a risk of the inherent centrifugal forces of Cicek society tearing apart this structure and returning to the older chaotic state.

Cicek Military

The basic unit of Cicek military organization is the tribe. Each tribe fields an armed force ranging from a large company to a small regiment in size. This tribal force has two leaders - a male leader with enough Glory and charisma to command all other males in the tribe in war, and a female leader - or several female leaders - who deals with everything else: intelligence, logistics, medical services, and even field artillery. There are also front-line female units in some Cicek tribes, but the significant advantage in body size and brute strength makes Cicek males dominant in infantry combat; females, of course, have no problem fighting in other combative roles such as crewing armored vehicles or serving as snipers. Fighter pilots, however, are typically male, as the competitive and daring nature of the typical Cicek male makes him an excellent combat pilot.

Since each tribal unit is autonomous, they are by necessity combined-arms groups, though some specialization exists among Cicek tribes: the starfaring tribes usually have naval assets and a space-mobile ground force, while more planet-bound tribes combine infantry, armor, and artillery; larger tribes also have dedicated air support, while smaller tribes field mostly infantry forces, typically employing guerrilla tactics. The tribal system also favors simpler and easier to maintain arms and armor. Cicek usually employ slug-throwers which are simpler to manufacture and maintain than the more complex energy weapons. While Cicek artillery rarely has the precision of Reticulan fire support, Cicek highly dynamic combined arms maneuver tactics compensates for this weakness.

The Cicek's greatest asset in war is the Cicek male: not only is he a large, physically powerful being, but also his very nature compels him towards daring acts and bravery. Glory, after all, is the precious commodity of Cicek male culture, and heroism under fire will grant the plucky Cicek male much Glory - so much that most will risk death for a chance to gain it. Under a charismatic and Glorious war-leader, Cicek males are excellent fighters eager to engage the enemy, and are rarely deterred by superior firepower. When such a leader falls in combat, his replacement fills his position almost immediately. For the Cicek, the local male hierarchy is very clear, and almost instinctive, at all times. The highest-ranking Beta male will quickly become the new Alpha male. After the battle, several other Beta males might try and oust such a newcomer from power, but as long as the guns are firing, the old hierarchy remains.

Playing a Male Cicek

When playing a male Cicek, players should be competitive and individualistic. The one thing which matters to the player character more than anything else in the world is Glory: impressing other Cicek males with your achievements. A male Cicek strives for excellence in his undertakings to show his superiority in Cicek male society, and thus advance in the hierarchy. Other males are never friends: they are competitors. Competition might be sportsmanlike or vicious, but it is competition in every case. A Cicek always measures himself in comparison to other males, and tries to best them in business or in war. A Cicek male is also an individualist - he respects only the authority of those with greater Glory than himself, especially in case of other male Cicek. And even a more Glorious authority figure is someone to eventually best and replace. A Cicek male will accept alien authority more readily, and will not foolishly rebel for the sake of rebellion, but still - his very nature leads him to question all authority, at least to a certain degree.

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The Cicek male's competitive nature also extends towards aliens, though to a much lesser degree. He doesn't care about besting them - as he has little interest in climbing alien social ladders - but his instincts and cultural conditioning calls upon him to compete and answer challenges, as well as to show his superiority - not in empty boasts, but in actions. He always seeks to be the best, and to prove himself. A male Cicek may have alien allies, but even then, he will always strive to demonstrate his worth and glory to them. Cicek male aggression and competitiveness does not necessarily express itself in violent ways, but when in combat, a Cicek will always fight bravely and try to earn Glory by daring actions.

Playing a Female Cicek

A Female Cicek cares about her tribe, or whatever social unit she feels attached to. Unlike her male counterparts, she has little interest in hierarchy and status, and instead she prefers to cooperate with others for the common good. Like all Cicek, however, she feels little attachment or loyalty to any social unit or group larger than her tribe, crew, or group of friends; larger national or even ideological concepts are less appealing to her than those she cares about personally. The female Cicek is a team player, but never a patriot, or a model corporate citizen. The Confederation, the Republic, the Empire, or the company's goals do not concern her as much as her friends' well-being.

Cicek female society is democratic and egalitarian. Lacking aggressive territorial and hierarchical instincts, and having strong maternal instincts (as mating is casual but the female does take care of the young she births), the tribe-sisters work together for the benefit of their Cicek offspring, their male counterparts, and their tribe. Leadership roles are fluid, and rarely fought over - The Cicek female does whatever is good for her sisters and children. She may be a good leader, but she prefers to lead as part of a team, the first among equals, and to share responsibilities. She will fight fiercely to defend her tribe and friends and to further their interests, but she will not fight for the sake of martial glory alone.

The Nomadic Zhuzzh

One can find Zhuzzh trader (and pirate) ships in many places across known space, from Terran stars to the far end of the Reticulan Empire – and beyond. They peddle scrap, deal in artifacts of questionable origin, and get involved in all sorts of quasi-legal and illicit affairs.

Biology

The Zhuzzh are insectoids, though they do have features which resemble those of higher vertebrates, such as temperature regulation and internal gestation of their young. Zhuzzh stand approximately 170cm tall and weigh approximately 50 kilograms. They have four limbs: two powerful legs and a pair of arms. Each arm ends in a hand with two fingers opposed by a thumb for grasping and fine manipulation. The Zhuzzh have two large, black, shiny multifaceted eyes, two short antennae, and a mouth where the "chin" should be with four visible mandibles. Zhuzzh exoskeletons come in a dazzling variety of colors and patterns, though the most common color is reddish-brown: they can range from olive-brown to black to yellow and even to orange in color.

Male Zuzzh are wingless while the females are winged. Although they are unable to fly long distances due to their mass, these wings and powerful legs allow Zhuzzh females to jump long distances. Zhuzzh have a multi-plated, rigid exoskeleton protecting their vital organs. Their brain is a distributed network of ganglia around their thorax; the Zhuzzh head contains the primary sense organs and mouth, but does not house the central nervous system.

Zhuzzh are omnivores capable of eating a wide range of organic substances, including materials which other species consider to be refuse. They can digest almost any plant or fungal material, but also like to vary their diet

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with animal products. They have, however, a strong preference to strong smells and tastes, such as highly spicy food, but also bitter dishes. As the descendants of opportunistic scavengers who once lived in the detritus of the Precursors, they retain their ancestors' keen sense of smell and taste – both sensed by their antennae rather than by their mandibles.

Zhuzzh bear live young after seven months of gestation. A female only has to mate with a small number of males in her life-span to carry enough sperm for several litters of young. The young can crawl on all four limbs immediately at birth, and may walk upright within two months. Birth may be separate from insemination by multiple years. The mother and whatever nest-members she currently lives with will raise the young. After eight cycles of molting – approximately 10 Terran years –, the young Zhuzzh reaches full biological and social maturity. Zhuzzh rarely live over the age of sixty Terran years.

Psychology and Society

Eons ago, the Zhuzzh were a primitive species found on one of the Precursor (see below) colony worlds, existing at the very early stages of full sentience. The current socio-evolutionary theory explaining the origin of the Zhuzzh is controversial. It posits that the early Zhuzzh were scavengers and pests spreading from their world's jungles, and eventually infested abandoned sanitation tunnels to feast upon the detritus of Precursor society. When Precursor civilization collapsed, the hardy Zhuzzh survived and spread into the ruins. Consequently, the early Zhuzzh socio-cultural order evolved in a treasure-trove of Precursor high technology; some even theorize that a few Precursors lingered behind and directly influenced the Zhuzzh social order.

The hypothesis of Precursor influence explains how Zhuzzh society rapidly progressed, moving from the stone age to space flight in only a few millennia. This saved the Zhuzzh from much of the long, torturous years normally required for building a civilization. However, this rate of progress also created great unevenness in Zhuzzh cultural development. Having access to the high tech made relics of the past, the Zhuzzh have certain “black box” or even “cargo cult” attitudes towards technology and science. A significant portion of their engineering principles are “rules of a thumb” passed down through the generations, the result of a long, long tradition of reverse-engineering Precursor relics. The Zhuzzh make excellent technicians, mediocre engineers, and poor scientists. They are very good at tinkering with machines and jury-rigging repairs, but are not known for designing and building new machines from the ground up.

The Zhuzzh are opportunists, a trait inherited from their ancestors who were pests in Precursor societies. They are highly pragmatic, and will use anything which will give them or their nest-mates an advantage. They will trade honestly, swindle, or steal, depending on whatever is most advantageous in any given circumstances. This opportunistic streak has earned the Zhuzzh a shady reputation among other species. It may be an unfortunate stereotype, but it is hard to trust a Zhuzzh's loyalty and morality. They are always shifting. While Zhuzzh are amoral and typically untrustworthy, establishing a level of trust within their nest is very pragmatic. Thus, Zhuzzh rarely cheat or betray their nest-mates out of the simple need to maintain a functioning group capable of achieving various ends and seizing all sorts of opportunities.

Zhuzzh live in nests: groups ranging from a handful of individuals to a few thousand. A nest has no true leaders; Zhuzzh prefer to discuss matters and reach a consensus instead of entrusting someone to give orders - such discussion and decision-making are highly pragmatic as it balances the strong centrifugal forces of an anarchic society of opportunistic individualists, as the Zhuzzh are. This enables the Zhuzzh to easily maintain this highly fluid consensus within the nest. Zhuzzh also switch nests as circumstances dictate, or as they desire. Nothing is set in stone in Zhuzzh society except for the Traditions - mostly related to technology, science, medicine, spaceflight, and worship of the Ancients. The Traditions are common to all Zhuzzh. Traditions include rituals and “know-how” necessary for technological functioning. For example, plotting a jump course for a Zhuzzh starship is not a matter of navigational technique, but rather a ritual invoking various Precursor “patrons” combined

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with actual astrogation. Similarly, when acquiring new technology, Zhuzzh always bless it first in the name of the Precursors to ward off evil machine-spirits and to ensure good luck in its operation.

Tinkering with salvage is a major aspect of Zhuzzh technology. They can take scrap - and they do like to lay their fingers on scrap - made by other beings, and create their own devices out of it. Naturally, the technological composition of such devices can vary significantly: the Zhuzzh can cobble together a primitive steam engine, but an advanced micro-fusion reactor will power it. Each Zhuzzh nest has its own manufactory or workshop, where Zhuzzh tinker with their technology and produce new devices out of scrap. It goes without saying that salvage operations are central to the Zhuzzh economy, as is trading for all sorts of used or salvage technology and scrap. The recent Terran Liberation War has been a boon for the opportunistic Zhuzzh.

Culture and Spirituality

As mentioned above, Zhuzzh have a cargo-cult view of technology and science, combined with an opportunistic outlook towards current affairs. They like trinkets and artifacts, and have an insatiable interest in machines and tinkering with them. They also have a very opportunistic and entrepreneurial spirit. Zhuzzh like to engage in all sorts of salvage, trade, and piracy activities, as long as it is considered advantageous to them.

Zhuzzh culture combines tribal and shamanistic customs with advanced technology. A starship might have talismans affixed to an advanced jump drive. The Talismans are there to protect the drive from the demons of space, and are considered as integral to the functioning of the drive as any other part. Zhuzzh pilots often perform rituals to appease spirits prior to taking off or performing a jump, and then they will activate modern software and machinery to make the trip to distant stars. The Zhuzzh Technopriests are a unique combination of shaman, technician, and engineer. They build and maintain machines in the spirit of those of the Great Teachers, and protect them from demons and evil spirits by various incantations and fetishes. Each nest has its own Technopriest, leading spiritual life and serving as chief engineer; Techno-acolytes serve as engineers and mechanics. Because of this mystical approach to engineering, Zhuzzh machines look like haphazard collections of components held together by duct tape, makeshift frameworks, and shamanic fetishes. Sleek and efficient designs are completely anathema to the Zhuzzh.

All Zhuzzh worship the Great Teachers, their name for the Precursors. The Zhuzzh recite blessings in the names of the Precursors before working on machines or activating them. They never sculpt or draw any likeness of the Precursors. This would be blasphemy. The Zhuzzh consider the Great Teachers as spiritual and technological guides. When they do not fully understand the inner workings of a mechanism, Zhuzzh will often say: "This is how the Great Teachers will it" or "The Great Teachers have taught us thus", contributing to their common "black-box" mystification of technology and science.

Nomadic Life

No one knows where the Zhuzzh homeworld is located, and many Zhuzzh do not care much about the world itself, as the "Works of the Great Teachers" exist on many worlds. Instead, the modern Zhuzzh have long since adopted a nomadic lifestyle. Zhuzzh travel in their nests - chaotic groups of Zhuzzh run by consensus, typically with some internal blood relations. A single large ship, or even a jump-capable hollowed asteroid, can contain a nest. Alternatively, the nest can be split into multiple ships among a small flotilla.

Beyond the nest, Zhuzzh have little political organization. One nest may share the same beliefs and speak the same language as another nest, but Zhuzzh society by its very nature is quite chaotic and fluid. Sometimes, multiple nests will combine efforts towards a shared goal, but rarely will this lead to lasting commitments. Zhuzzh will readily trade with others of their own kind, and are slightly less likely to commit acts of piracy against other Zhuzzh compared to against alien victims, but other than that, they rarely see need for a higher level of political organization.

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Zhuzzh are typically highly opportunistic and very, very practical. They prefer trade over piracy, but when dishonesty in trade would be more advantageous, they will readily swindle and cheat; a favorite trick played on gullible Terrans and Reticulans is to sell “genuine Precursor artifacts” which are little more than painted trinkets and junk. And in those instances, when it is most advantageous, the Zhuzzh will turn to piracy and raiding and take what they want, rather than trade or swindle for it. In general, the Zhuzzh are famously neutral in interstellar affairs. During the Terran Liberation War, they traded with both Terrans and Reticulans, and engaged in acts of piracy against both—often at the same time.

The Zhuzzh are neutral in interstellar affairs and maintain their vast trade network. They trade with everyone and maintain trade-stations and trade-routes across all known space and possibly beyond it. While each Nest is independent, it is very prudent and pragmatic to maintain the “Interstellar Silk Road” connecting all known polities in a web of commerce and communications. The Zhuzzh have a shady reputation, and sometimes are the harbingers of trouble, but they do control the largest – if highly diffused – commercial apparatus in known space, and thus all polities do welcome them into their territories. Even the aggressive Chiwak allow the Zhuzzh to maintain trading stations in their space, as the commerce they bring is valuable enough that the Chiwak make way for it.

These insectoids also maintain the largest postal system in known space. While one should expect the Zhuzzh to peek at the contents of any package sent through their trading network (and possibly sell any information gained in this way to the highest bidder), the Zhuzzh never lose a parcel, and never steal it, as maintaining their reputation as a reliable way to send mail is very pragmatic and profitable. This ensures diplomatic communications even between bitter enemies. The Zhuzzh even had a hand in the Terran-Reticulan peace treaty, serving as impartial mediators. This mediation comes at the price of blatant espionage by the Zhuzzh, but this is usually tolerated due to the benefit of having a neutral party mediating in trade and negotiation.

Zhuzzh Military

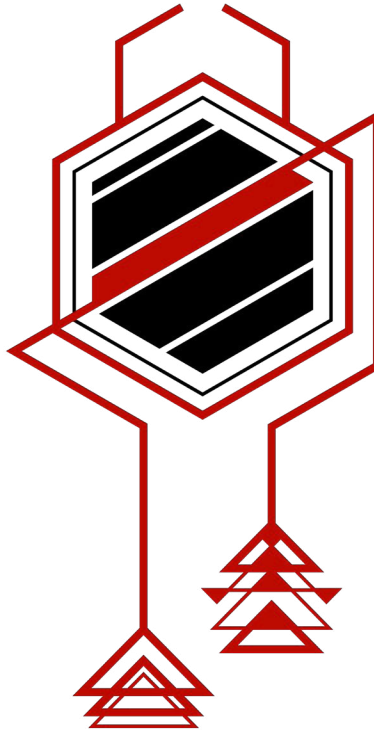
Since the Zhuzzh do not have a cohesive political structure, the Zhuzzh also lack an organized large-scale military. Their nests are much smaller than even typical Cicek tribes; consequently, the Zhuzzh can rarely field a unit larger than a Terran platoon or company. As born and bred opportunists, however, they excel in small-unit tactics and guerrilla warfare. Zhuzzh pirates are highly adept in boarding a target ship from multiple entry points, surprising and overwhelming the defenders and quickly disappearing with their plunder.

Zhuzzh employ elaborate, hand-crafted weapons, each hand-made by its owner from all sorts of scrap. A Technopriest will almost always participate in building a weapon’s core mechanism. Zhuzzh weaponry varies wildly, from simple shotguns to complex contraptions that shoot plasma bolts. Zhuzzh personal armor is also hand-crafted, usually in the nest’s manufactory. While a single Zhuzzh is quite a hardy creature, it can wear armor ranging from scrap-mesh to fully-blown powered suits. Their equipment is clunky, but brutally effective.

The hardy Zhuzzh excel in close-quarters combat. Not only does their exoskeleton grant them natural resilience, but they are the masters of fluid, “soft” martial-art techniques. Combining jury-rigged gadget and odd hand-weapons with their excellent mobility – not to mention the female Zhuzzh’s flight capabilities – they are viciously dangerous in close quarters. Inside their own ships, they are an even worse foe, as a Zhuzzh starship is bound to have hatches, crawlways, and ducts aplenty, and the Zhuzzh excel in navigating them to surprise an enemy from the most unexpected direction.

Zhuzzh also employ custom-made robots, typically refurbished alien models, for support and intimidation. Finally, since the Zhuzzh are naturally resistant to pollutants and many chemicals, they commonly use many chemical weapons, such as sedatives, or even poison gas, typically delivered in grenades or bombs.

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In space, some would misjudge the typical Zhuzzh ship as a heap of scrap. This may be true, but, a Zhuzzh vessel is a heavily-armed, fine-tuned heap of scrap. A Zhuzzh vessel bristles with weapons, is well-armored, and is well-stocked with missiles and secondary attack craft like fighters. It is difficult to distinguish between civilian and military Zhuzzh vessels, and many serve in both roles. This can be a source of great consternation to customs patrol crews, who are called upon to inspect a Zhuzzh ship filled with valuable trading goods, but that is also heavily armed. Zhuzzh will rarely - if ever - attack a well-defended foe, but when the opportunity arises to rob a lone merchant far from the patrol routes or even raid a distant colony they will sometimes do so. Zhuzzh will never engage a more powerful foe on its own terms unless an opportunity arises to catch it unprepared or in a weakened state. Stories of Zhuzzh “carrion” ships attacking disabled vessels are very common.

Playing a Zhuzzh

When playing a Zhuzzh, a player must think and act in the most practical and opportunistic manner possible. The player character can have friends of all species, and will generally be loyal to those considered as part of the “nest”. This includes aliens, but beyond the immediate “nest”, a Zhuzzh will seek the most advantageous course of action in each situation. A Zhuzzh is not above treachery, theft (both petty and grand), and deception if that will further the character’s goals. The Zhuzzh character is pragmatic: when solving problems, a player should try to utilize the most practical solution, not necessarily the most morally correct one. In combat, the character sees no problem fighting in an underhanded manner, doing what it takes to take down the opposition. The Zhuzzh player should embrace stealth, sniping, ambushes, and guerilla tactics. The modern special forces adage of “if you find yourself in a fair fight, change your tactics” can be perfectly applied to the Zhuzzh.

A Zhuzzh character is fascinated by technology and any kind of machine. The character will have a natural, very spiritual affinity to them, and a culturally-ingrained desire to tinker with them. The character will see scrap and all sorts of mechanical detritus as a treasure, and usually have the skills to construct their own contraptions, given time. The character’s attitude towards these machines, however, is not that of a scientist or a conceptual

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engineer, but that of a tinker, a technician, and a cargo-cult shaman. When dealing with technology, use mystical language peppered with religious and superstitious terms: whisper incantations while working, and protect machines from demons and spirits by attaching fetishes and talismans on them.

A Zhuzzh should also have great interest in the Great Teachers, known as the Precursors to other species. For the Zhuzzh, they are not just mysterious aliens from millennia ago; they are the Great Teachers, and the Zhuzzh's equivalent of gods. A Precursor artifact is not just a technological wonder to reverse-engineer, but also a religious relic to worship. Xeno-archeology comes naturally to the Zhuzzh, and many are quite comfortable dealing in questionable relics in shady startown markets. The Zhuzzh are adept in appraising and haggling technological materials, whether they are in operable condition.

As a Zhuzzh, you should bless any new technological item you get in the name of the Great Teachers, while cursing the evil Machine Spirits to keep them away from the device. When repairing a machine, you must first perform ritual cleansing – major starship repairs might even require the help of a Technopriest to call upon the Great Teachers to grant the mechanic or engineer with their divine knowledge. Before a Zhuzzh starship enters jump-space, you must dim all lights onboard the ship and keep quiet, lest the Demons of Netherspace notice the light and sound and come to devour the ship and its occupants; once in jump-space, the chief engineer pours five drops of holy machine-oil on the jump-drive, curses the Demons of Netherspace in the name of the Great Teachers, and then solemnly announces in the ship's intercom that the crew and passengers may turn on the lights again and resume conversation. Similarly, nuclear radiation is sacred to the Zhuzzh. Unlike other species, who cleanse themselves of radioactivity only after leaving an irradiated area, Zhuzzh must perform both practical and ritualistic cleaning before entering the radiation zone and after leaving it – as the unclean must not defile the holy light of the Great Teachers.

Ssesslessian Harmony

The Ssesslessians, some say, barely qualify for the title of a “Major Species”. After all, for many centuries, they did not have a homeworld and their numbers were few. Yet the Ssesslessians have maintained their culture and technological base even in exile. A few years ago, Terra gave those of them who threw off the Reticulan yoke a homeworld of their own, on which they are finally rebuilding their society. For the Ssesslessians, this is unimaginably embarrassing and an affront to the Gods. After centuries under the Reticulan yoke, after plotting and planning their ultimate revenge, these upstart Terrans come and grant them freedom and a new home-world. Terrans view the Ssesslessians as beholden to them – and treat the Harmony as a client-state. The Ssesslessians resent this. While they are grateful to the Terrans, they dislike any Terran mention of their liberation, as it reminds them of their shame. If the gods meant the Ssesslessians to serve as a tool of punishment upon the Reticulans, as they did believe for centuries, why did they use the Terrans do to so, and not their sharpened Ssesslessian blade? Some Ssesslessians even see their freedom as false and the Terrans as a new equivalent of the Reticulan slave-masters, and thus plot to disconnect the Harmony from the UTR and its influences.

Biology

Ssesslessians are warm-blooded reptilians who also show some similarities to mammals in their circulatory and homeostatic systems. Their upper body and head are mostly humanoid in nature, but their lower body is fused into a single, slithering “leg”, eventually tapering into a long tail. This feature gave them the common name “Snakes” or “Serpents” among Terrans. This “leg” allows the Ssesslessians to move with surprising speed. However, the Ssesslessian's greatest physical advantage is in using their leg-tails to wrap themselves around objects. This makes them quick, agile, and stable climbers. Their tail is fully prehensile, allowing for a “third hand” with enormous flexibility. Because of their tails, Ssesslessians also swim well in water and can easily navigate uneven surfaces. Their bodies are well-muscled and quite flexible.

A Ssesslessian stands on average approximately 160 centimeters from the ground up, but its “leg” or tail may extend up to another meter and a half. The Ssesslessian torso is quite like a human one, with two well-muscled

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arms, each ending in a hand with four fingers and two opposed thumbs. Their elongated heads have four eyes – two on each side – with slit pupils, giving them excellent night vision and highly accurate depth perception. Their tongues, like those of several Terran reptiles, are longed and forked, and are used for smell as well as taste. They have an impressive set of sharp teeth, attesting to their carnivorous nature; the common theory is that on their original homeworld, they were apex predators, born to hunt in the moonless nights of its many swampy jungles.

Unlike Humans, Cicek, and Zhuzzh who have two sexes, or the Reticulans who reproduce a-sexually, Ssesslessians have one sex, but do reproduce sexually. Each Ssesslessian is a hermaphrodite, its body containing both male and female reproductive organs. After fertilization, an embryo will gestate for eight months. A live birth will follow, and the parent will feed the newborn chewed and mashed meat. A Ssesslessian can eat fresh meat from the age of one Terran year, once their teeth develop. They reach full sexual and mental maturity in their late teens. Ssesslessians live somewhat longer than Terrans, with an average lifespan of 120 standard years.

Psychology and Society

A major factor in all matters related to Ssesslessian society and psychology is their tragic history. Centuries ago, the Ssesslessians ruled their own interstellar polity. They encountered the Reticulan Empire during a phase of its outward expansion. The Reticulans tried to bring the nascent Ssesslessian state under their control as a client species, but the proud Ssesslessians resisted. Unfortunately, their small fleets and rapid assault units were no match for the mechanized Reticulan military might. Refusing to surrender to the Reticulans after their fleets were defeated over their homeworld, the Ssesslessians suffered the worst fate of any Reticulan client species: the Ssesslessian homeworld was bombed from orbit, destroying its lush ecosystem, and exterminating nearly all of the Ssesslessian population. The Reticulans then enslaved most of the surviving Ssesslessians. They were employed as their assassins and auxiliaries. Some Ssesslessians became nomadic refugees, but they often ended up as thralls of the Reticulans.

Ssesslessian society is very homogenous; all worship the same pantheon of gods and follow the same professions of monks, sacred assassins, and priests. Their Reticulan masters reinforced this cultural unity, as it increased the Ssesslessians' usefulness as specialized military and intelligence auxiliaries. The center of contemporary Ssesslessian culture is the cult, a specific iteration of the Ssesslessian religious system that includes several tens or hundreds of thousands of Ssesslessians, led by a council of priests, and worshipping a specific subset of the vast Ssesslessian pantheon. There are several tens of millions of Ssesslessians in known space, split into at least three dozen cults. The pantheon is common to all surviving Ssesslessian, but each cult follows a distinct patron-god. All Ssesslessians hold religious rank within their cult, and each is a member of one of the seven castes. From the lowest-ranking to the highest-ranking these are: The Unclean, Merchant, Artisan, Nurturer (or farmer), Warrior, Assassin, and Priest castes. A Ssesslessian child belongs to its parent's caste, and in traditional Ssesslessian society there is almost no social mobility between castes.

The council of priests runs their cult as a well-oiled machine. Each Ssesslessian knows their place in the system. Ssesslessian social life is simple and well-ordered; Ssesslessian see the caste they belong to as a decree from the Gods themselves, and their actions as detailed by the Scriptures – the old religious scrolls saved from their burned homeworld and held sacred by all Ssesslessians. Each starship carries a copy of the Scriptures, and each cult holds a single original copy of the Scriptures brought from the home-world. Ssesslessians see their pecking order as divine in nature and the priests as the conduits to divine wisdom. The common Ssesslessian faith was that the gods have entrusted them with the task of exacting revenge on the Reticulans, and this requires generations of spiritual and martial training.

The council also decides on economic production levels, and the merchant caste fills the gaps in the planned economy and provides some economic flexibility. In this highly rigid structure, however, the main outlet for individualism and the only way to opt out of the caste systems, is to go into space and become "rogue" Ssesslessians. These "rogues" are casteless and free, but are outcasts, despised by the major part of Ssesslessian society. Rogue Ssesslessians will typically form loose nomadic groups, sometimes acting as assassins-for-hire,

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sometimes as pirates, sometimes as explorers. Under Terran influence, the number of rogues has grown significantly, and such outcasts can now find shelter and work in UTR space. During the War, for example, many Ssesslessians fought on the Terran side – and later settled in Terran space. These vagabonds still maintain their belief in the many Old Gods of the Ssesslessians, but adhere to a somewhat less strict interpretation of the above-mentioned Scriptures.

Culture and Spirituality

Ssesslessians see themselves as the tools of the Gods, the harbingers of the God's will, and the sword in their hands. They even view their homeworld's fall as a preparation for their utmost mission – to exact divine punishment on the Reticulans, whom they view as the eternal enemies of the Gods. It is obvious that prior to first contact with the Reticulans, they held different beliefs, and a common hypothesis is that back then their society was far more varied. The Ssesslessian believe that they have managed to hide this idea from their Reticulan masters, and, indeed, their rigorous spiritual training allows them to mask their true thoughts even from the most powerful telepath, such as the Reticulan Imperial Line. However, it is very likely that the Reticulans did know of this belief, and manipulated it to their own purposes.

Even the most rebellious outcast still honors the Old Gods, the only cultural relic remaining from their lost homeworld. Their ancestors have worshiped these gods for millennia. Tradition and faith are centrally important to the typical Ssesslessian. Rituals are passed down through many generations, and these have enabled the species to survive war and exile as a culture. All these traditions have been maintained even under Reticulan cultural manipulation and under more benign Terran influence.

There are thousands of Ssesslessian Old Gods. The commonly-held theory is that in the original Ssesslessian society, each cult worshipped its own protector-gods, in addition to the universal Ssesslessian gods. In modern Ssesslessian culture, each cult has its own chief deity, but its members also venerate a wide array of other gods and demi-gods. Ssesslessians burn braziers and incense in front of the statues and figurines of their gods, idols lovingly cast and sculpted from metals or even rarer crystals. Every Ssesslessian starship has a shrine to gain the protection of the Old Gods and their blessings in the crew's far travels.

Ssesslessians are traditionalists, steadfast in following the ways of their ancestors. They long for their homeworld even today, even after they gained their new world of Mehen. Social norms and social cohesion are important parts of their culture, given the pressures of fitting into the proper caste that each Ssesslessian feels every day. This tendency to conform enables Ssesslessians to work well in teams, but they work even better as part of a Ssesslessian cult, when they feel their Old Gods' watchful eyes gazing upon them from the Great Shrine, the mythical seat of all gods in heaven. This Ssesslessian traditionalism does, however, tend to devolve into fatalism and "the serene acceptance of one's fate", as decreed by the Old Gods.

Sseslessian Harmony

During their long subjugation under the Reticulan Empire, the Ssesslessians had no political framework, save for that of their immediate cult – which they believed was honing them for their eventual divine mission of bringing the Gods' punishment upon the Reticulans. Any national sentiment was long extinguished, culled by the Reticulan's nuclear fire—or so the Reticulans thought. The fire of the Terran rebellion rekindled a longing for independence in many Ssesslessians. Many Ssesslessians served as terror troops, special forces, and assassins for their Reticulan masters, but many others believed that the Terran rebellion was an omen from the Gods calling for their strike at the Reticulans – as an instrument of the Gods' wrath. Often, entire cults of thousands would defect from the Reticulan Empire and join the Terran rebellion *en masse*. Many Ssesslessians served in Terran units, but others formed their own secret society, the so-called Ten Thousand Daggers, and took bloody vengeance and divine punishment against the Reticulans.

The Ten Thousand Daggers devoted themselves to sabotage and assassination, and would eventually grow into a wider religious-political movement. Members of the Ten Thousand Daggers were sworn to appease the ancient

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wrath of the Old Gods by shedding Reticulan blood. The Terrans supported this movement and inserted their advisers into it. In the early days of revolutionary fervor, when Humanity still fought for replacing the Reticulan Empire with an Interstellar Republic, Terra hoped to shape the Daggers into a republican movement, and to eventually establish a Ssesslessian canton in the greater Interstellar Republic. The Ssesslessians naturally preferred a theocracy, and reinstated a Grand Cleric—the first in centuries—and proclaimed a Harmony, a hierarchical religious state uniting all rebelling Ssesslessians. The Terrans reluctantly agreed to this form of government, to retain their Ssesslessian allies. In the closing years of the war, the United Terran Republic granted a captured Reticulan colony world to the Ssesslessians as a reward for their part in the War of Liberation. This world, now called Mehen, was considered an ideal habitat for the Ssesslessians, despite it being underdeveloped. The difficult part was not organizing the Harmony, but rather convincing the Ssesslessians to postpone their Holy War against the Reticulans and thus allow the peace agreement. The Ssesslessians gave in to the massive Terran pressure to end the War, but still long for the future second round of war, when they will complete their diving mission. Even today, they refuse to deal directly with either Technate or Empire. Any contact they have with the Reticulans is indirect and through Terran or Zhuzzh agents.

The Ssesslessian Harmony is a young state, but deep-seated Ssesslessian traditions have helped make the entire system work very quickly, with a unified religious hierarchy employing priests and justicars to guide the faithful. It is anything but a democracy, though Terran influence did manage to loosen the rigid Ssesslessian social structures to some extent. This was especially the case for returning war veterans, even those among the Unclean caste, who found themselves new places in higher castes. This was an entirely new phenomenon for the culturally rigid Ssesslessians. In the Harmony, the basic social and political unit remains the cult, but now several cults have become a wider community led by a high council of priests; the Harmony is essentially a confederation of such communities led by the Grand Cleric. Well-organized and hierarchical, the Harmony is now set to rebuild Ssesslessian society on Mehen, their new homeworld.

Ssesslessian Military

For centuries, the Ssesslessians served the Reticulan Empire as assassins, spies, and special operators. They also rigorously trained for their eventual divine mission of punishing the Reticulans for their affront of the gods. They are well-adapted to small-unit tactics, independent action behind enemy lines, and guerrilla warfare. While they were a Reticulan auxiliary species, the Ssesslessians did not form any military forces larger than a commando company, typically carried by small, fast, and stealthy assault craft. A single cult would usually maintain its own spec-ops unit and tiny fleet of infiltration starships, typically overseen by a Reticulan officer. Many Ssesslessians also served in the Reticulan Imperial Legion, earning great military experience and extensive cybernetic and genetic modifications.

The Ssesslessians who joined Terra during the War served either in their own infiltration units, or in the multi-species Interstellar Division. Terran and Cicek heavy naval and ground forces carried out large-scale positional and maneuver operations, while Ssesslessian units performed surgical strikes and sabotage operations behind Reticulan lines. Following victory, the newly-formed Ssesslessian Harmony lacked a “proper” navy or army. The Harmony is now investing in a rudimentary large-scale military led by Interstellar Division veterans, mostly armed with surplus Terran equipment. This is still a small armed force resembling a guerrilla army rather than a proper military formation. However, with veteran officers, Terran military advisers, and imported Terran ships and weapons, it will grow into a considerable force within a decade. Still, the small overall Ssesslessian population on Mehen will limit its might for centuries to come.

Ssesslessians favor highly mobile warfare, with an emphasis on guerrilla tactics. Instead of engaging their enemies face to face, they prefer to flank them, or engage them from ambush. This applies to both small-units as well as for larger operations. The use of poison, booby-traps and other unconventional weapons and tactics is a staple in Ssesslessian combat. Ssesslessians rarely carry heavy weapons, beyond what they can carry on person or on their infiltration starship – until very recently, they did not employ armored formations or heavy ground-based artillery, as favored, for example, by Terrans.

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Playing a Ssesslessian

Ssesslessians are religious. When playing one, mention the Old Gods and their Providence often, and try to keep a shrine, even a small one, aboard any ship or house the Ssesslessian character inhabits for a long duration. Ssesslessians view their success as their blessing, and their failure as divine punishment. As well, focus heavily on Tradition, especially those customs that remain from the Old Homeworld, unchanged despite long centuries of Reticulan repression. Ssesslessians value their traditions, their cult, and their friends. They firmly believe that each has a role to play in life, and each has a proper place in society.

This, of course, assumes that the character in question is a traditional Ssesslessian living within the Harmony, or at least influenced by it. There are, of course, rebels and outcasts, as in any social order, whether human or alien. An outcast will still hold onto many traditions and beliefs, but will reject the Ssesslessian social order almost entirely. After all, it can be argued that the species' traditions and rigid social structure is a byproduct of Reticulan subjugation. Alternatively, a Ssesslessian might have fought alongside Terrans and Cicek and was influenced by their notions of individuality and social mobility. But rebel or conformist, outcast or an integral part of Harmony society, a Ssesslessian will have a strong respect to the Old Gods and Tradition, even if you disagree with some of the specifics. Heretics sometimes choose from traditions and Gods, but all believe in their divine mission, and see the current peace with the Reticulans as a merely a temporary delay in the Divine Plan.

In combat, Ssesslessians will use surprise, stealth and ferocity to defeat the enemy, rather than a frontal assault. They excel in underhanded tactics, and prefer an indirect and thoughtful approach to battle over more overt tactics. Ssesslessian explorers and adventurers are careful and calculating, never quick to rush into potential trouble. In negotiations, they will try to gain advantage through cunning, rather than intimidation or flattery.

Other Aliens

There are other sentient life-forms in the universe in addition to the Terran, Reticulans, Cicek, Zhuzzh, and Ssesslessians. Some dwell remotely from Terra, while others are long-extinct. Here we will detail some of these species, starting from the most important and vicious of them – the mighty Chiwak.

Chiwak

Some would say that the Chiwak are the “poster raptors” of the Gardener Hypothesis (see below). Their resemblance to Terran theropods – the biological classification that includes modern birds as well as ancient carnivorous dinosaurs such as the Tyrannosaurus Rex and Veloceraaptor– is uncanny, lending credence to the theory that the hypothetical Gardener Aliens transplanted Terran theropod specimens to the Chiwak homeworld of Ren-Jia (pronounced “Ren-Ya”) millions of years ago. Chiwak walk on two clawed feet, and have two well-developed clawed arms ending in hands with two fingers opposite a thumb. Chiwak are feathered and have a horizontal-to-stooped – rather than erect – posture like that of Terran dinosaur raptors. The head is well-developed, with a large brain case and mighty jaws, as well as large, highly developed eyes. Coloration varies between the sexes, with females typically having a uniform plumage of drab color, ranging from grey to brown, while males display a dazzling array of colors.

Chiwak are pack hunters by nature. They are fully carnivorous and highly social, and their instincts have been honed by millions of years for hunting and killing. The basic Chiwak social unit is the pack, led by a dominant couple of an alpha male and an alpha female. There are several subservient couples, usually consisting of siblings of the alphas and their mates. Younger Chiwak typically will challenge older dominant ones to depose them in plumage and singing contests, and vicious combat. The parents raise their young with help from the rest of their pack. Eventually, the alpha male will drive away his grown sons, and the alpha female her daughters, who will then seek to join another pack as beta members. Offspring of beta couples in the pack sometimes stay, or leave to seek out mates or other packs.

Each pack conducts its affairs collectively. These affairs range from industrial production, research, or, more commonly, war. Usually a single Chiwak pack will leave one member behind on a safer Chiwak world to tend to

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their young, while the rest of the pack then serves as a military unit. This is a major reason for Chiwak military prowess, as the warriors in each pack are family members and fight together with great loyalty. Traditionally, the alpha female leads the hunt; the alpha male serves as a secondary hunter - usually responsible for overseeing the young and raising them. Typically, the males are more engaged in religion than the females.

Beyond the pack, the driving and organizing force of Chiwak society is religion. Unlike most species which have several competing faiths, the Chiwak have a single dominant faith common to their entire species: The Cult of the Nine Gods of the Hunt. Chiwak leaders are the Shamans of the Gods of the Hunt. Chiwak faith demand the sacrifice of hunting spoils to the Nine Gods to ensure good bounty in future hunts. In war, they sacrifice ranking enemy officers. This adds to their already fearsome reputation, and serves as a weapon of psychological warfare. This does backfire, as any officer in any force fighting the Chiwak will, obviously, refuse to surrender and will fight to the end – knowing that being captured alive means sacrifice to the Nine Gods.

Contrary to their image as bloodthirsty savages, the Chiwak have another side to them. Their superb vision and keen eyes give them a strong sense of aesthetics, and their inborn attention to details makes some of them into marvelous painters and calligraphers. They are also the only known non-human species whose biology is conducive to love and human-analogue family life, with elaborate courtship rituals and long-lasting relationships. Thus, the Chiwak display beauty and savagery, love, and passion—as well as blood lust.

The Chiwak have been the eternal nemesis of the Reticulans. For almost the entire millennium-long history of the Reticulan Empire, the Chiwak have been a menace on its Rimward border, constantly struggling with the Empire over choice worlds and resource-rich asteroid belts. The fighting flares and subsides, but almost always the Reticulans must send troops to their Rimward border to hold back the Chiwak. During these border wars was where many Terrans met the Chiwak as auxiliary troops sent to fight and die on distant worlds for alien masters. When the Terrans began their revolt against the Reticulan Empire, the Chiwak took the opportunity to increase pressure on Reticulan space. This was of great concern to the Reticulans especially when the Empress ordered the Rimward Great Houses to divert forces to the Terran frontline. While the Chiwak have little interest in direct alliances with aliens, especially ones living several months away, during the War there was an understanding of sorts between the UTR and the Chiwak. This included some limited military coordination, and forced the Reticulans to fight a two-front war.

In war, the Chiwak are the complete opposites of their Reticulan enemies. Where Reticulans are calculating strategists, Chiwak are daring tacticians. Wherever Reticulans substitute technical prowess for bravery, Chiwak rely on their inborn predatory instincts and passionate bloodlust to subdue even technologically-superior foes. The Terran saying is that in battle, a single Chiwak fights like two Terrans, or five Reticulans.

The Chiwak - at least those known to Terran explorers - all belong to the Chiwak Dominion, a militarized theocracy engaged in an aggressive expansionism against other species, but especially the Reticulans. Unlike the Reticulans, however, the Chiwak are interested in territory, not subjects or markets. They also bear little hostility towards aliens far away from their Dominion. While they fought the Reticulan expeditionary forces - Terran units included - with great zeal and brutality, they usually maintain business-like relationships with Terran explorers and merchants who venture this far to Rimward. Their interests and faith call for war against those standing between them and the worlds they desire, but once an alien species does not stand in the way of their expansion, Chiwak behavior toward the species is far less aggressive.

There is considerable xeno-archaeological evidence that indicates that the Chiwak were related to the Precursors, just like the Reticulans. Chiwak bones are common in Precursor sites, and ancient Precursor murals and hieroglyphs sometimes depict beings like the Chiwak. They might have been one species in a multi-species Precursor society, or perhaps servants of the Precursors. A common theory holds that even millennia ago the Reticulans and the Chiwak were at each other's throat; one version of this theory posits that a genocidal total war between the two species brought down the mighty Precursor civilization. The evidence, however, is too incomplete to be conclusive.

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Fanja-Kanja

Hailing from a world to the Trailing-Coreward side of Reticulan space, the Fanja-Kanja display reptilian, avian, and mammalian characteristics. They are humanoid in shape, and some Terrans claim they have feline characteristics. However, in place of fur the Fanja-Kanja have feathers, and their feet resemble those of birds of prey. They lay eggs and feed their young chewed food instead of milk. But their “felinoid” characteristics are very prominent to Terran observers; some would even say that the Fanja-Kanja are a cross between a cat and an owl, though biologically speaking such Terran perceptions are misleading.

Fanja--Kanja are highly solitary individuals. Often, any social interaction apart from reproduction is optional; - many Fanja--Kanja are content to live their lives alone and do not feel loneliness of any kind; others choose to spend their lives with others of their kind, but such communities are typically small, temporary, and entirely voluntary. Thus, Fanja-Kanja rarely have any centralized government other than the Reticulan-administrated Combine, which is described by one Terran observer as a government that “herds kittens.” Fanja-Kanja economics tend towards moderately-competitive laissez faire markets, though they lack the strong competitive urge common to male Ciceks and some humans, outside of Fanja-Kanja space, they usually work as small-ship free traders, miners, and prospectors, and rarely attach themselves to any larger political or economic body.

Even reproduction among the Fanja-Kanja is highly individualistic. Males and females rarely create lasting relationships, and have sexual interest in each other only during the reproductive season. The main instances of serious aggression among the Fanja-Kanja occur during this reproductive season, as males compete over receptive females. In modern times, however, these aggressive urges find their sublimation in less violent competitions, such as athletic competitions, or poetry readings. After mating, the male leaves and the female lays the egg, incubates it, and raises the kitten alone. The main social relationship among Fanja-Kanja, therefore, is between the mother and the child, though once the chick matures, around puberty, it typically develops its own individual character and moves on to find its own way in the world.

The defining trait of Fanja-Kanja psychology and culture is curiosity. A common Terran metaphor is that Fanja-Kanja see the universe as a big game or a pile of toys to be played with. Nothing thrills a Fanja-Kanja more than a mystery needing solving. Because of this characteristic, Fanja-Kanja tend to make excellent scientists and interstellar explorers, and their preference for laissez faire markets turns many of them into interstellar traders as well. They are not overly aggressive but do have a certain skill in combat due to their omnivorous-hunting instincts. Their highly individualistic nature also makes military organization difficult, as any Fanja-Kanja works primarily for themselves, and is disinclined to follow orders.

In the Reticulan imperial system, Fanja-Kanja find roles as research assistants and deep-space exploration scouts. While they have a keen interest in science, the Reticulans sometimes find their intense curiosity to be somewhat irrational and not conducive to the procedural laboratory work favored by Reticulan institutes. However, should the Empire require scientific mavericks and daring interstellar scouts, Fanja-Kanja do fill this role very well. Due to their distance from Terran space, Fanja-Kanja are not very common on Terran worlds. Terrans typically encounter Fanja-Kanja as Free Traders, independent Scouts, or as crewmembers on Reticulan freighters and research vessels.

Phnunk

The Phnunk appear at first glance to be humanoid with two arms and something resembling a face, only with writhing tentacles where a mouth should be. But beneath the robes they favor is a writhing mass of tentacles attached to a central body! Several of these tentacles at the bottom serve for locomotion, and two bundles of tentacles serve as “manipulators. Several internal organs exist within the central body, including the five neural masses working together as a brain. The Phnunk have no vocal chords. Instead, they communicate via a complex set of gestures made with their mouth tentacles; the Reticulans have developed a device used to translate this exotic language.

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Biologically speaking, Phnunk are closer to their homeworld's fungi than to any animals. Their biochemistry is an exotic combination of carbon and silicone compounds. They are reducers, and can digest anything organic or organic-like silicate, regardless of origin or biochemical make-up. Phnunk rarely eat any living creature, and prefer consuming decomposing matter. Phnunk reproduce by spores, emitting a cloud of them in certain environmental conditions. Two spores from two different Phnunk that come into contact will unite to form a growth in the ground. This later becomes the immobile immature stage of the Phnunk, which will eventually become a sentient, mobile adult.

Despite their frightening appearance, Phnunk are very peaceful creatures, more interested in forming "garden pods" — their communities — in dark, humid places and tinkering with technology than waging war or engaging in commerce. Given the highly complex biochemistry and ecosystems of their homeworld, they have developed a knack for biotechnology and chemical engineering. Their society is communal, with each "garden pod" being an autonomous social and economic unit managed together by the adult population, who also tend to the vegetative immature Phnunk.

Phnunk breath an exotic atmosphere of methane and nitrogen, atmosphere classification "A" in the UWP code. The Reticulans have leased the Phnunk several of these worlds on the Rimward side of Reticulan space. The Phnunk have seeded those worlds with spores of various lifeforms as part of their "Phnunkaforming" projects. The Phnunk do have their own starships and rarely stay aboard ships belonging to other species for prolonged periods of time due to the difficulties of catering to Phnunk life support requirements (mainly atmospheric). When they do so, they wear fully-enclosed environmental suits, or in the rare instance they engage in boarding operations, sealed combat armor.

The Phnunk are a client species of the Reticulan Empire, and are given various engineering and mining tasks on exotic-atmosphere worlds. They are also commonly employed in research and development in various biotechnological and biological technology laboratories. The Phnunk are rare on the Terran border of Reticulan space. However, a Phnunk colony established on Saturn's moon Titan during the EFA days sided with the Terrans. The colony is now undergoing terraforming into a warmer Phnunk world. Titan's Phnunk residents are UTR citizens and export a wide variety of complex organics from Titan to the neighboring worlds of Terra, Mars, and Calisto.

Klax

The Klax look like an eight-limbed crustacean nearly two meters tall and weighing 100kg. It has a complex, segmented exoskeleton and a cluster of sensory stalks and antennae where its head should be. Klax walk on their four rear limbs. The next pair is well-developed into grappling pincers for brute-force interactions with the environment. The fourth and final pair of limbs are closer to the Klax's mouth, and are used for fine manipulation and eating. The Klax brain rests under heavy exoskeleton plates in the Klax's belly, while the "head" holds only the sensory organs and mouth — which contains three pairs of tiny but sharp limbs serving as mandibles. Klax are fully amphibious, sporting both gills and lungs; when outside water, certain exoskeleton plates slide and conceal the gills and keep them moist, while the creature uses its lungs. When underwater, the lungs empty and flatten and the gills are revealed to allow gas exchange with the surrounding liquid. Biochemically speaking, Klax are truly alien, with dextro-amino acids and a genetic system using five nucleotides highly different than the four nucleotides found in humans, Reticulan, Cicek, or Chiwak. Their blood uses copper rather than iron to transport oxygen, which gives it a greenish hue.

Klax are hermaphrodites, each carrying both sperm and egg equivalents. After copulation between two Klax, each will become pregnant and will eventually lay a cluster of eggs. In ancient times, they laid eggs into the swamp; today, they do so in their nest's temperature-regulated spawning pool. The eggs hatch into fully aquatic larvae; most do not survive into the adult form, and only a few grow to a larger size and begin developing lungs and a more complex brain, later emerging from the water as young Klax. As the spawning pool — and the swamp before it — is always shared between multiple Klax, all adults take part in the upbringing of the young and their development into adult Klax.

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The basic unit of Klax society is the nest, comprising as many as several dozen adult Klax with several young. A group of nests forms a community, and many communities is a troop or a small nation. Usually there exist at least remote blood-kinship between troop members. As social creatures, Klax work well together, a trait which – alongside their great physical resilience and omnivorous-hunter nature – makes them excellent soldiers. In ancient times, troops waged war on other troops over access to the dwindling water resources of their homeworld which was undergoing a natural climate change cycle and turning warmer and dryer. When the Reticulans discovered and conquered the Klax, they bestowed upon their new client species terraforming technology. This gift has been put to good use, and the Klax have transformed their world into a watery paradise. They have also united their troops into a world government ruling all Klax.

Inhabiting the Rimward-Trailing side of the Reticulan Empire, the Klax usually encountered by Terrans work as security troops on Reticulan ships. The Terrans only fought the Klax in significant numbers towards the end of the Liberation War, when the Empress instructed all Great Houses to join the war effort, including house Dreipa, which ruled the Klax. House Thiragin had mostly Cicek and Ssesslessian auxiliaries in its service.

Precursors

Ten to fifteen thousand years ago, a powerful and advanced civilization dominated known space. The common Terran name for this empire – or empires – is the Precursors. Most contemporary scholars agree that multiple species comprised the Precursor civilization, either as members of the same political entity, or possibly as rival polities. The latter hypothesis fits the archeological evidence better, as the Precursor civilization disappeared approximately five thousand years ago, in what appears to be genocidal total war between two or more species or factions. One can find scars of that (hypothesized) war scattered around known space: worlds still contaminated with extensive radioactive fallout, obvious bomb craters marking ruins of ancient cities, laser marks on moons and asteroids, and even wrecks of Precursor warships.

Since the Precursor civilization vanished a relatively short time ago, there is plenty evidence for its existence. Although Precursor machines rarely work anymore due to millennia of erosion from planetary weather systems or exposure to hard radiation and heat stress in vacuum, a clever xeno-archeologist can expose significant parts of their inner mechanisms. Few Precursor records remain, as even the most resilient electronic storage media possessed by the Precursors failed with the passage of time. However, some written or etched script does remain, and allows modern researchers to catch glimpses of an advanced civilization.

The old artifacts hint at a civilization significantly more advanced than any species in 2260. There is evidence that the Precursors were capable of marvelous megastructure engineering and wondrous achievements in the field of robotics and space travel. Precursor starships were much larger than anything even the Reticulans can build today, and their space stations were even larger. Cities often were built as giant arcologies, held in place by advanced material science and gravitics; when the Precursors fell, many of these structures collapsed when the antimatter reactors powering the gravitic plates eventually failed. Or precise orbital strikes destroyed them. But their remains are still impressive, and from time to time modern science can glean scientific or technological secrets from their derelict machines. This makes intact Precursor artifacts extremely valuable.

It is also common knowledge that the Reticulans, and possibly the Chiwak, are related to the Precursors. The Reticulan Empire uses that alleged fact as part of its subtler propaganda efforts, spreading a mixture of rumors and truths about the Reticulan past to make the Imperial masters seem mysterious, powerful, and awe-inspiring. Indeed, many Precursor sites in Terran and Cicek space do contain Reticulan bones, or even mummified Reticulans. In some cases, one may find Chiwak bones as well, though these are much rarer.

An interesting fact which the Reticulan Empire is very tight-lipped about is that, in addition to the familiar Reticulan bones found in Precursor sites, one may find different bones from those resembling modern-day Reticulans. Reconstruction suggests that they came from a taller, slenderer creature than a modern Reticulan.

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This in turn points to a possible Reticulan sub-species which may have gone extinct in the Precursors' final war. Modern Reticulan culture has rumors and legends about such creatures. However, even the archives on Keid opened to Terran scholars by the Technate rebels do not contain any concrete information about them. The Imperial Archive on Zeta 2 Reticuli f likely contains knowledge on this topic, but the Imperial Household keeps these archives under lock and key, providing access only to a handful of trusted (Reticulan) scholars.

If the Reticulans were indeed one of the Precursor species, or even the dominant Precursor species as some of them claim, their current empire might have risen from the ashes of the old; a commonly-held Reticulan legend speaks of an older homeworld, far to the Rimward, possibly in what is now Chiwak space. The Reticulan legends also speak of a vast, old Empire ruled by their kind. However, in addition to the Reticulans, and possibly the Chiwak, another culture has also grown out of Precursor ruins: the Zhuzzh. These insectoid opportunists were primitive – some would say at the early stages of their sentience – when the Precursors disappeared, and progressed quickly towards spaceflight within a few millennia by learning from Precursor artifacts –back when more artifacts were still active – and by scavenging Precursor technology.

Previous cycles of civilization?

There is a significant probability that one or more alien civilizations might have evolved between the disappearance of the Gardeners – the hypothetical civilization which presumably spread Terran-compatible life to many planets approximately 70 million years ago - and the rise of the Precursors. However, the more distant the age being investigated, the less evidence remains available. Therefore, there is considerable difficulty involved in proving the existence of ancient alien civilizations predating the Precursors. However, scattered and somewhat flimsy evidence allows for tentative hypotheses about several previous “cycles” of civilization to be made.

Current research, as well as documents recovered from old Reticulan archives by joint UTR and Technate forces, give hints to at least two ancient civilizations, one flourishing approximately eight to six million years ago, and another more recently, ruling the stars approximately 500,000 years before the present. Reticulan archeologists have unearthed ruins of the older civilization on at least one world to Rimward of Terra. While little remains from their culture aside from fossilized buildings buried in deep ice, the structures that do remain

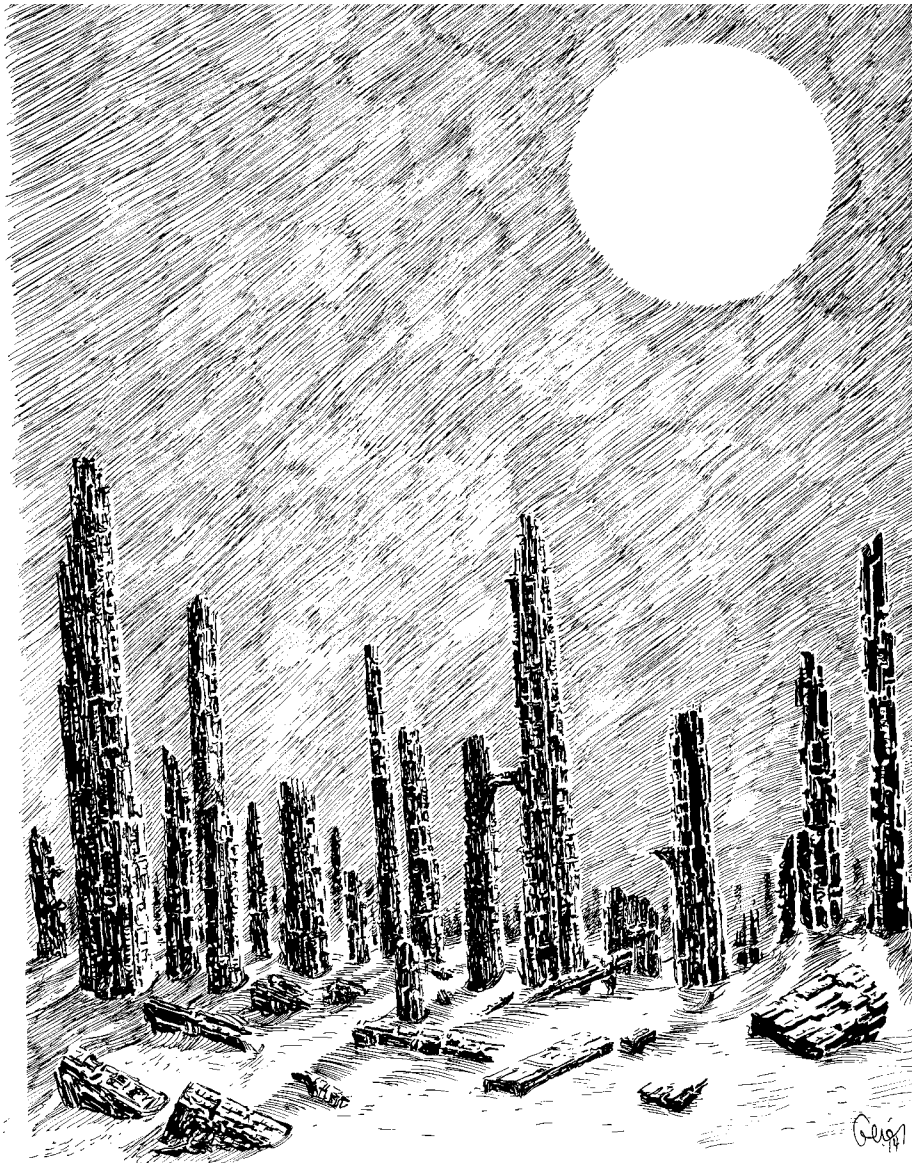
Precursor Artifacts

Popular Terran culture – as well as the startown-bazaar stalls of the Zhuzzh – is replete with supposed rumors of incredibly powerful Precusor artifacts. Typical holovids and augmented reality games feature dastardly villains who pursue relics of great power to use as tools for their nefarious schemes. Ghost stories revolve around some mysterious Precursor monolith or pyramid containing long-dead – or sleeping – alien spirits. And holographic or even old-fashioned miniature tabletop wargames sometimes depict gallant Terran troopers fighting against vile alien forces over the control of such remnants. Reality, however, is far more prosaic.

No complex mechanism can survive millennia and remain in perfect working condition. In an atmosphere, an artifact would have to contend with corrosion and even bio-degradation if life is present. In hard vacuum, radiation, vacuum-welding, and heat differentials will wreak havoc on ancient machines, and particularly on the delicate nano-circuits of advanced electronics. Simple mechanical door hinges might still work, but complex machines are invariably non-functional after such a long time. Finding a working Precursor computer or even a non-corrupted datadisk is the holy grail of xeno-archeology. Thus far, no xeno-archeologist has ever made such a monumental discovery.

That said, Precursor artifacts – even in their inoperable form – are still valuable to researchers. While they might never work again, in some cases enough has survived over the millennia so that their outline and structure remain preserved. Through painstaking research and meticulous reverse-engineering, modern scientists might slowly gain useful knowledge from these machines. Thus, a Precursor site is a great find, not only for the xeno-archeologists looking for insights into this long-dead culture, but also for prospectors looking for artifacts to sell to research institutes and corporations engaged in long-term research.

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hint at an aquatic species much larger than a human or a Reticulan. This species also possessed a strictly non-humanoid physiology, possibly with a preference for cold climates and underground habitats. The Reticulans who unearthed these ruins also found fossilized bones of several creatures, but it is highly unclear which of them was the sentient species who built the structure to begin with.

Cicek prospectors are rumored to have found what appears to be the remains of a vast starship or space station to Rimward-Spinward of Terra. The rumor claims that Terran scientists who examined the structure, located deep in an asteroid belt at the far rim of Cicek space, determined it to be artificial, and dated its construction to approximately 500,000 years ago. After so many millennia of hard radiation, vacuum, and heat stress, none of the old ship's machines remained in any sort of working order, and even the alien writing was eroded for the most part. But working together, Terran and Cicek scientists managed – or so it is claimed - to find scattered parts of alien script, which remain undeciphered. While most organic material on the ship has degraded under constant radiation and heat differentials, the explorers managed to find several curious shells or exoskeletons thought to belong to the ship's builders. Similar shells exist in fossilized form on a few worlds in Cicek space and in the Spinward Terran frontier. This has led to xeno-archaeologists to theorize that these are the remains of the star-faring species which built the asteroid-belt structure.

No other hard evidence exists of ancient alien civilizations. This, however, does not deter Terrans or Zhuzzh peddlers from disseminating a near-infinite number of rumors and half-baked theories regarding ancient alien ruins of all sorts: the supposedly vanished pyramids on Mars predating the old Reticulan base on Cydonia, or even

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the Precursor ruins close to it, the structures that are supposedly built according to non-Euclidian architectural principles deep in alien oceans far in the colonies, and the strange organized light patterns reportedly seen in the swirling atmosphere of various gas giants. The Zhuzzh occasionally try to sell various “artifacts from before the time of the Precursors”; all of which are most likely to be fake. Whether these rumors have any substance behind them or not remains to be seen, and the Imperial Archives on Zeta 2 Reticuli f might hold even more surprises if the UTR were to ever lay its hands on this treasure trove of historical records.

An untold number of tiny fringe religions, even weirder than the Exalted Order of Fomalhaut, exist and worship alien gods: The Old Ones who dwell in the dark between the stars, or the Ancients said to be made of dark matter that live in intergalactic space. Little or no evidence backs these claims, but this does not deter cultists and fanatics of all kinds from performing all sorts of strange, often drug-induced, rituals dedicated to these alien gods. Cases of fraud related to these “ancient aliens” also abound, as well as several cases of psionic con-men claiming descent from ancient aliens

The Gardeners

When Earth was conquered by the Reticulans and humans finally travelled the stars, they noticed a great similarity between lifeforms and environments on many worlds. This fact also corresponded with Reticulan records showing a pattern of similar evolution – and even genetic similarity – of creatures living on worlds many parsecs apart. This gave rise to a “panspermia” theory, that hypothesizes a common origin for a significant part of life-forms across many worlds. This theory is more commonly referred to as the “Gardener Hypothesis”.

The Gardener Hypothesis posits that approximately seventy million years ago, a sentient species formed an interstellar civilization in an area of space around Sol. The Gardener Hypothesis further posits that the biological similarity between many of the known sentient and non-sentient species across known space arises from their evolution from imported stock, some of which may have been Terran in origin. In its most radical form, this hypothesis claims that the Chiwak and possibly even Cicek and Reticulans have evolved from Terran animals imported to their prospective homeworlds millions of years ago.

Scientists explain that the Gardeners had a habit of terraforming worlds and transplanting creatures from a variety of “interesting” (to them) worlds and spreading them to any number of terraformed worlds. One of the common origin world for transplanted creatures appears to be Earth, though the Reticulan scientists emphatically reject this claim as a byproduct of Terran nativism. It also appears that the “Gardeners” did not perform much genetic engineering on their transplanted lifeforms. Instead, they engaged in planetary and biosphere engineering and life-form importation.

Additional cycles of civilization?

A common theory regarding the evolution of galactic civilization posits that sentient life and its attendant interstellar civilization both develop in cycles. Each cycle is thought to be five to ten million years long, with each civilization reaching to the stars, expanding, and eventually entering a phase of shorter cycles of expansion, partial collapse, then recovery, expansion, partial collapse, and so on. Each civilization may contain one of more alien species living at the same time and interacting with each other, in peace as well as in war. Eventually after eons, the cycle ends. Little is known about what the end stage might look like; common explanations range from the inevitability of total war, to spiritual and technological transcendence beyond each species’ physical and biological form. Another component of the theory is that the cycles play out in a different way in different parts of the galaxy, so that – hypothetically – if one would travel far enough, one could encounter advanced alien civilizations, or the smoldering ruins of a recently dead, or at least partially-collapsed, civilization.

The weakness of these theories lies in the paucity of evidence for them. While Terran researchers in the 2260’s know about the Precursors and at least two or three alien civilizations, they do not know enough about previous civilizations to validate or disprove this cycle theory. It is still a matter of debate.

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The Gardeners are long gone. Their fate is a mystery which is unlikely to ever be solved, since it is highly unlikely that any clear evidence for their activities or even existence has survived the passage of time. However, several of the worlds thought to be terraformed by the Gardeners seem to have undergone an extinction event, which most likely involved an impact by a large asteroid or comet. However, dating is not accurate enough to tell if all impact events have occurred at the same time, or several millions of years apart, or if they were anything more than a curious coincidence. In any case, the vast bulk of Gardener technology and cities were slowly reduced to nothing but anomalous concentrations of elements in soil and rock – anomalies which do exist on several worlds, and to a lesser degree on Terra. No known Gardener machines survive in an even remotely operable form. Some of their artifacts - trash - were fossilized and discovered on several worlds; there are also fossilized bones which may or may not be fossils of the Gardeners.

However, the Gardeners' true legacy is not fossilized archeological artifacts but terraformed worlds and the widespread existence of life forms originating from Terra, across multiple worlds. Some Gardener worlds failed and reverted to their pre-terraformed states. others survived. Everything changed with the passing of tens of millions of years. Some life-forms went extinct at the same time as the Gardeners or in the intervening millions of years. Others survived virtually unchanged. yet others continued to evolve.

CHAPTER 3 – RULES AND CAREERS

“I served in the 46th Guard Drop Battalion, the best of the best. Back in ‘35, the Greys were the galactic top dogs, and we were just upstarts. I still remember the day we dropped on Belobog. The whole world was on fire, and we jumped right into it – to kick some serious Grey butt. They had grav-saucers, space-saucers, and walkers; we had disposable launchers and good ol’ Type-33 ACRs. So, they had more firepower. But we had more balls. In war, balls count for more than firepower, you know? But it was still a farkkin’ meat-grinder. We were the toughest, meanest sons o’ bitches in known space, and still only about half of us came back. And we were the best Humanity had to offer – still they killed half of us. And you little maggots won’t survive even ten minutes against the Greys! But, I’m here to kick your sorry asses into true Guard shape! Now move it!”

- **Sgt. Mark Duranov, Terran Marines boot camp, Chiron, May 22nd, 2259 – addressing raw recruits**

This chapter includes detailed character creation rules, as well as rules for cybernetics. While the base assumption is that the characters will be human, there are several alien races that can be played as well as aliens providing NPC rolls. The alien species presented here are unique to this setting, but could be added to any other appropriate science fiction setting. Therefore, to better provide your campaign with material specific to this setting, we present you with a plethora of optional rules regarding characters and their creation. We also present the five common alien species and 16 careers tailor-made for this universe.

Aliens

Chapter 2 provides extensive details about the alien species specific to this setting. Here we discuss playing the aliens as characters, both in general rules and in specific careers. All these species, except for the Reticulan Hybrid – which is technically human – have their own careers later in this chapter. The Reticulan Hybrid, on the other hand, may enter various Terran careers, though these are subject to special rules described for this “species”. Note that the following alien species descriptions use the Alien Traits, described in CE43-45, as well as new ones detailed here.

Chiwak

Most campaigns will not include Chiwak PCs, but Chiwak NPCs will be more common, so we provide a career for use by the Referee. Chiwak descend from Carnivore-Chaser pack hunters and have a generally saurian appearance. They are fast, vicious, and born to fight. While rare on the Terran border, they are more common on the Rimward side of the Empire and are the primary enemy fought by humans prior to the Terran Liberation War.

Chiwak have the following racial Traits: Fast Metabolism, Feral (EDU 1D6), Heavy Gravity Adaption, Natural Weapon (Bite, 1D6), Notable Dexterity (+2), Notable Endurance (+2).

Cicek

The reptilian Cicek males are larger than females; females are human-sized while the males are larger than humans. Males and females have semi-separate societies. Males are highly competitive and live in a constantly changing hierarchy; they care about Glory (impressing other males to gain status). Among Cicek Males, Social Standing is very fluid and changes much more often than it does among females or most other species. Females have a broader vision and care more about the whole tribe. Cicek are descended from Omnivore-Pouncer/Hunters.

Cicek mature somewhat faster than humans but, when they survive the constant violence of Cicek life, they may live as long as humans do and reach the age of 100. They start their careers at age 14 and start aging at 34, at the end of their fifth career term, and then age per the regular rules. Cicek may use the character careers for no more than 7 terms.

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Cicek have excellent night vision, but are somewhat sensitive to bright lights, especially at the blue end of the spectrum (-1 DM to skill rolls in bright, blue light). They are natural climbers and have a +2 DM on all Athletics checks related to climbing. They can cling to walls and even ceilings with a successful Difficult (-2) Athletics check each round.

Psionics are about as rare among Cicek as they are among humans. Cicek psions are called Shamans.

Cicek have the following racial Traits: Heat Endurance, Low-Light Vision, Natural Climber (see above). Cicek males have Notable Strength (+1), while Cicek Females have Notable Education (+1).

Humans

While not an alien race in most RPG games, it is important to clearly describe the base-line from which all other aliens are defined. Under the Reticulan occupation, there was a lot of social engineering, but very little change to the physical human form, other than the Hybrids discussed later.

Humans under the EFA were forced to adopt a single language, called Terran. Terran is a creole of old English, Russian, Chinese, and Spanish, but is translated into English for this book. While other languages are spoken, they are in the minority, or spoken as a second language in some smaller communities or colonies. As the EFA tried to wipe out cultural differences, that just forced those cultures underground and strengthened them. Once the EFA was overthrown and the UTR formed, the War took so much focus, that few cultural traits emerged. However, now that the war is over, there is a definite, “where we came from” movement among many humans. One thing that the EFA could do quite effectively is remove the inter-cultural prejudices that existed before the arrival of the Reticulans. Under the UTR, all humans think of themselves as Terran first and only if pressed would they call themselves “Caucasian” or “Chinese”. But, humans being what they are, those old prejudices have been transferred to the Hybrids, and to a lesser extent other races, most notably the Reticulans.

Humans begin their careers at age 18 and begin rolling on the Aging table at 34, after 4 terms. Humans normally live to about 100 years old. Humans may use the career tables for up to 7 terms.

Psionics were not discovered until after the Reticulan invasion. At that time, it was determined that half of a percent (0.5%) of humans have the genetic traits required to become actively psionic.

Humans have no special Traits and all characteristics are rolled using 2D6.

Reticulan

The grey-skinned aliens called Reticulans by humanity, mature much more slowly than humans and enjoy longer lifespans. They start their careers at the age of 26 and begin aging only at age 50, at the end of their sixth term. Afterwards, they make an Aging table roll only every two career terms (8 years). They often live over 150 years, but the elite enjoys longevity treatments which extend their lives to several centuries. All Reticulans are female. They are descended from Scavenger-Carrion Eaters. Reticulans may have up to 12 terms using the career generation rules.

Reticulans have the following Racial Traits: Engineered (TL11), Low Gravity Adaption, Notable Intelligence (+2), Small (STR 1D6, DEX 3D6, END 1D6).

Reticulans within the Empire practice racial prejudice against all other species. This prejudice is explained more fully under Alien Species and Social Standing below.

In addition to the regular Reticulan Proles and Nobles, there are two unique Reticulan lines: Priestess and Imperial. The vagaries of psionics are such that only the Imperial line is reliably psionic. All other lines have psionics at the normal rate (about half of one percent). Psionics are tightly controlled within the Empire and only Nobles can be trained as psions. When a Reticulan Noble achieves SOC 12 or higher, they are automatically tested for psionics, and if they are found to be psionic (roll of 18 on 3D6), they become Priestesses. Priestesses use the normal Noble career with the option to substitute a Talent skill for a rolled skill.

Reticulan Hybrid

The Reticulans created “hybrids” by genetically modifying human embryos and adding Reticulan genes into their DNA during their occupation of Terra. Hybrids are inter-fertile with normal humans but have several Reticulan characteristics that affect their career choices. Hybrids have six digits per hand and foot, and large, almond shaped eyes with black pupils. They are also all psionically active. Hybrids are almost universally slender. Due to their unfortunate history, most humans have a negative impression about Hybrids, although the government is attempting to overcome that issue.

Children of Hybrid and base humans tend to be either Hybrid or Human in appearance (50-50 chance of either). Grandchildren are almost always human and the hybrid genes rarely pass down more than one generation.

Reticulan Hybrids mature somewhat slower than normal humans, but since they are part of human society, still begin their careers at age 18, but do not reach full maturity until age 22. However, the hybridization between human and Reticulan genomes does produce some incredible benefits, most notably the universal psionic ability. Hybrids have slightly extended lifespans, gaining a +1 DM on all their aging roles, using the normal human table and timelines. Hybrids may use the career generation tables for a maximum of 8 terms.

Hybrids may take any human/UTR career. However, due to their unique abilities, they commonly enter CRC-32 or the PRI. Mundane careers such as the Scouts or Colonist careers are also common as Hybrids often try to remove themselves from the unfortunately still too common prejudices of the core human worlds.

Reticulan Hybrids have the following racial Traits: Bad First Impression (humans only), Engineered (TL13), Notable Dexterity (+1), Weak Strength (-1), Psionic.

Ssesslessian

Ssesslessians are humanoids with a snake leg/tail that is prehensile (they can snake around objects to climb). They have 4 eyes and excellent depth perception. Ssesslessians are descended from Carnivore-Killers.

Ssesslessians are somewhat longer-lived than humans. They reach maturity and start a career at age 18, just like humans, but don’t start rolling on the Aging table until age 38, at the end of their fifth career term. Afterwards, they roll on the Aging table as normal, but enjoy a +2 DM to all rolls. They often reach the age of 120 years. Ssesslessians may use the career tables for a maximum of 9 terms.

During their long centuries of subjugation by the Reticulans, the Ssesslessians have learned how to shield their innermost thoughts from unwanted telepathic intrusion. While they cannot develop “proper” psionics, all Ssesslessians have the Shield ability of the Telepathy psionic talent, and it is always active. Ssesslessian characters are usually Outcasts; living apart from the highly regimented, caste-like society of the Ssesslessian Harmony.

Ssesslessians have the following racial Traits: Cold Blooded, Fast Metabolism, Large (STR 3D6), Notable Dexterity (2D6), Telepathic Shield.

Additionally, their four eyes provide Ssesslessian’s with excellent depth perception, giving them a +1 DM to Hit on any ranged attack against targets up to Medium range.

Zhuzzh

The insectoid Zhuzzh are somewhat larger than humans, have a strong natural carapace, and good sense of smell using their antennae. Females have wings and can use them to jump incredible distances, although they cannot actually fly. All Zhuzzh are resistant to poison and diseases having evolved in the sewers and trash-heaps of the Precursors. Zhuzzh are descended from Scavenger-Hijackers.

Zhuzzh mature quickly and typically have shorter lifespans than other sentient species. They start their careers at age 10 and start aging when they reach the end of their third career term, at age 22; then age per the regular rules. Zhuzzh rarely live more than 60 standard years. Zhuzzh may use the career tables for up to 5 terms.

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The frequency of Psions among the Zhuzzh is slightly higher than among humans (0.7%), but they tend to be weaker than humans. Zhuzzh psions are so rarely encountered, that when creating a Zhuzzh psion, use the standard Zhuzzh career and add several skill levels of psionic talent as desired.

Zhuzzh have the following racial Traits: Armored (2 points), Low Gravity Adaption, Weak Education (-2), Weak Psionics (-1), and Poison Disease Resistance (+1 DM). Additionally, all Zhuzzh females are Great Leapers.

Careers

The remainder of this chapter presents new and revised careers for generating characters specific for TSAO setting. All careers follow the character creation rules given in CE Chapter 1 and repeated below for convenience. We also present optional Advanced Character Creation rules which include Mishap and Event table for greater background detail and variety. While we present here new and revised careers, you may still use the other, civilian Cepheus Engine careers, see *CE26*.

In the TSAO setting, characters are rarely beginners fresh off the farm; many were involved in the Terran Liberation War. There is no reason not to play a young and inexperienced character if you like, but since a broad range of skills is important to success in the game and most players will want their character to be a little bit more experienced in the world.

All characters begin at the age of majority, 18 for humans and different for other races (as discussed above). Having generated the characteristic scores and background skills, the character should begin serving terms in their chosen career. Each 4-year term spent in a career gives the character more experience in the universe, generally in the form of skills. Generate the results of each term before proceeding to the next. At the end of a period of service, characters roll for benefits gained upon “mustering out” (i.e. leaving the service). They may then attempt to start a different career or begin adventuring.

Character Creation Checklist

1. Characteristics
 - a. Roll the six characteristics using 2D6 with racial modifiers if appropriate.
 - b. Determine Characteristic Modifiers.
2. Homeworld (Optional)
 - a. Determine the character’s homeworld; work with the Referee to select one of the worlds on the TSAO starmap. You may use other homeworlds with the Referee’s permission.
 - b. Gain background skills. Characters gain several background skills at Level-0 equal to 3 + their EDU modifier. The first two skills must be taken from your homeworld; the rest are taken from the education list. Humans gain additional background skills if they grew up in the UTR.
3. Career
 - a. Choose a career. You cannot choose a career you’ve already left, except Drifter (*CE33*) or “racial” careers.
 - b. Roll to qualify for that career, as indicated in the description of the career. If this is not your first career, you suffer a -2 DM for every previous career in which you served.
 - c. If you qualify for this career, go to step 4.
 - d. If you failed to qualify for this career, you can attempt to enter another career, but with a -2 DM to

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your qualification roll; or you can enter the Drifter career (CE33).

4. Basic Training

- a. For your first term in your first career, you get every skill listed in the Service Skills table at Level-0.
- b. For your first term in any subsequent careers, you may pick any one skill from the Service Skills table at Level-0.

5. Survival

Roll for survival, as indicated in the description of the career.

If you succeed, go to step 6.

If you fail, you have died. The Terran War was hellish and most careers near the frontlines carried significant risks. However, particularly merciful Referees might decide that events have forced you to leave your career. In that case, you may roll on the Mishap table, increase your character's age by 2 years, then go to Step 11 (you do not receive a Benefit roll for this term).

6. Event

Optionally (but strongly recommended), roll on the Event table for your career. For careers in the CE rulebook, use the Civilian Events table provided here.

7. Commission and Advancement

- a. You begin as a Rank 0 character. If you have previous experience in another career, you may begin this career with some other rank, determined by the Referee.
- b. If your career offers a commission check and you are Rank 0, you can choose to roll for Commission. If you are successful, you are now Rank 1. Choose one of the skills and training tables and roll for an extra skill. Take any bonus skills from the ranks table for this career.
- c. If your career offers an Advancement check and you are Rank 1 or higher, you can choose to roll for Advancement. If you are successful, your Rank improves by one in your chosen career. Choose of the skills and training tables and roll on it for an extra skill. Taken any bonus skills from the rank table for this career. You can roll for Advancement in the same term that you succeed in a Commission roll.

8. Skills and Training

- a. Choose one of the skills and training tables for this career and roll on it. If you gain a characteristic improvement as a result, apply the change to your characteristic score immediately. If you gain a skill as a result and you do not already have levels in that skill, take it at Level 1. If you already have levels of that skill, increase your skill level by one.
- b. If your career does not offer a Commission and Advancement check, you may roll for a second skill from one of the skill and training tables for this career (which may be the same or different from the first table chosen for this term).

9. Aging

- a. Increase your age by 4 years.

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- b. If your character is 34 years or older (for humans), roll on the aging table.

10. Re-Enlistment

- a. Roll for re-enlistment. If you fail, you must leave this career. If you roll a natural 12, you cannot leave this career and must continue for another term, go to step 5.
- b. If you have served a total of seven terms or more in character creation (for humans), you must retire, go to Step 11.
- c. If you succeed in your re-enlistment roll, you may continue in this career, go to step 5.
- d. If you wish to leave this career, go to step 11.

11. Benefits

If you are leaving the career, roll for benefits. A character gets one benefit roll for every full term served in that career. You also get extra benefit rolls if you reached higher rank.

12. Next Career

If you are leaving your career and your total number of terms in character creation is less than seven (for humans), you may go to step 3 to choose a new career or to Step 13 if you wish to finish your character.

13. Buying Starting Equipment

Purchase your starting equipment and, if you can afford it, possibly a starship.

Characteristics

Characteristics measure a character's most basic abilities: how strong, dexterous, educated or intelligent they are. Characteristic scores influence almost everything your character does. Stronger characters can lift greater weights, more dexterous characters have better balance, and so forth.

Characters have six abilities: Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX), Endurance (END), Intelligence (INT), Education (EDU), and Social Standing (SOC). Strength, Dexterity, and Endurance are called physical abilities, whereas Intelligence, Education, and Social Standing are loosely termed mental abilities. Each above-average ability score provides a bonus on certain die rolls; while below average abilities apply a penalty to some die rolls.

The six characteristics for your character are briefly described as follows:

- **Strength** (STR): A character's physical strength, fitness, and forcefulness.
- **Dexterity** (DEX): Physical co-ordination and agility, reflexes.
- **Endurance** (END): A character's ability to sustain damage, stamina, and determination.
- **Intelligence** (INT): A character's intellect and quickness of mind.
- **Education** (EDU): A measure of a character's learning and experience.
- **Social Standing** (SOC): A character's place in society.

Psionic Strength, the Seventh Characteristic

Characters can sometimes have a seventh characteristic score. When a character learns psionics, they generate a Psionic Strength characteristic (abbreviation PSI), which powers their psionic talents. This characteristic cannot be rolled or bought during character creation without the Referee's permission.

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Terran Psionics

Psionics are hereditary in this setting. About half a percent (0.5%) of humans have the psionic gene and can become a psychic; with most other races having a similar percentage of psions. The genetic mechanism involves the interaction between several normal genes and a mitochondrial DNA gene. That is why the normal human genome sequencing, performed in the last 20th century, did not find the PSI gene – part of the answer is hidden in the mitochondrial DNA. In any case, any “normal” human being – not a Reticular Hybrid – will rarely have psionic ability, and powerful non-Hybrid Psions are rare.

There are two ways to become a non-Hybrid human psionic: be “discovered” as a Psion during character creation, or undergo Psionic testing later in life.

If you are using the Advanced Character Creation Rules in this chapter, characters who roll the Psionics War Event (or a similar Event in any Career) is a Psion – one of the lucky few. They must then roll 2D6 to determine their Psionic Strength (PSI). Characters with PSI 8- automatically qualify for the PRI and must complete at least one term in this service. Characters with PSI 9+ are automatically drafted into CRC-32 for at least one term of service. If you are only using the Basic Character Generation method, then the character can only be a Psion via career choice, with the Referee’s permission or through testing after play begins.

A character who did not roll a Psionics Event during character creation, or used the basic rules, may undergo Psionic testing during gameplay. All PRI branches – present on any UTR world with a Starport C or better – offer Psionic testing at a subsidized cost of Cr1000. Testing takes a full day. When testing for Psionics, the character must roll 3D6; on a roll of 18, they are discovered to be a Psion and can immediately roll 2D6 to determine their PSI attribute. Using Psionic powers requires training, which is very expensive, especially for an adult subject. Such in-game training costs Cr100000. However, characters with PSI 8+ receive a grant from the UTR government, reducing the cost to Cr50000 for PSI 8-10 and completely covering the training costs for PSI 11+. Note that the UTR government expects the character to become a PRI member after receiving such a grant. The character may still adventure as usual, but the government will expect them to follow PRI regulations, and perform services and missions for the Republic when necessary – especially in the case of a character with PSI 11+.

Note that in this setting, unlike the default Cepheus Engine rules, Psionic Strength **does not** decline with age regardless of training, but rather remains at the same level for the Psion’s entire life, unless changed through rare events during their Psionic career.

The UTR and most of the alien races are Psi-Neutral societies (*CE64*), although with regards to Reticular Hybrids humans are Psi-Hostile. The Reticular Empire is Psi-Friendly as only the Priestess and Imperial Lines are psionic. No one knows how the Chiwak feel about psionics, but they do have psions, and they are some of the most feared fighters anyone can face.

Generating Characteristic Scores

Generating characteristics scores is straightforward. Roll your six characteristics using 2D6, and record them in the standard order: Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX), Endurance (END), Intelligence (INT), Education (EDU), and Social Standing (SOC). Note that some aliens use different numbers of dice or have DMs affecting some characteristics.

Optional Rule: With the Referee’s approval, roll 2D6 six times and assign the results to the six different characteristic scores based on a particular character concept. For example, if you picture your character as a highly-educated researcher, then you might assign your highest result to Education, and assign your second highest to Intelligence.

Characteristic Score Limits For human player characters, a characteristic score may not typically exceed a

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maximum of 15, nor may a score drop permanently below 1 except under certain circumstances. For other races, the maximum for any characteristic score is 3 points above the maximum that can be rolled for that characteristic. For example, a Reticulan has 3D6 Dexterity, therefore, the maximum DEX for a Reticulan would be 21.

Characteristic Modifiers

Once you have assigned your characteristic scores, you can determine your characteristic modifiers. These modifiers are applied to any check when you do something related to that characteristic. A characteristic score modifier is calculated by dividing the characteristic score by three, dropping all fractions, and then subtracting one, so that the average characteristic score of 7 has a DM+0. Thus, a characteristic value of 2 or less has a modifier of DM-2, characteristic values of 3 to 5 have a modifier of DM-1, and so on. The Characteristic Modifier by Score Range table provides a synopsis of these modifiers, already calculated for you.

Characteristic Score	PseudoHex	Characteristic Modifier
0 through 2	0-2	-2
3 through 5	3-5	-1
6 through 8	6-8	+0
9 through 11	9-B	+1
12 through 14	C-E	+2
15 through 17	F-H	+3
18 through 20	J-L	+4
21 through 23	M-P	+5
24 through 26	Q-S	+6
27 through 29	T-V	+7
30 through 32	W-Y	+8
33 or higher	Z	+9

Altering Characteristic Scores

Over the course of play, your character's characteristic scores may change for the following reasons:

- Aging can permanently lower physical characteristic scores.
- Physical damage, such as from combat, falling, disease or poison, temporarily lowers physical characteristic scores.
- Mental trauma, such as head injuries and psionic attack, temporarily lowers mental characteristic scores.
- Certain medications, psionic enhancements, and other scenarios can temporarily or permanently enhance specific characteristic scores.

Whenever a characteristic score changes, you will need to determine the new characteristic modifier.

Gender and Race

In these rules, we make no distinctions between different members of the same species, regardless of gender or race. In this setting, humanity has united against its former Reticulan overlords; citizens of the UTR now see themselves as Terrans rather than as members of any "race" of humanity. Besides, in the realm of classic science fiction literature, heroes came in many different flavors and capacities, and were generally unhindered by their gender or the color of their skin.

The Cicek and Zhuzzh have different means of rolling characteristics for their two sexes. All Reticulans are female, so they don't understand why there would be any distinction about sex – it is illogical to them. Ssesslessians have only one sex. No one is quite sure what the Chiwak are like; they appear to have two sexes and the females make up most the fighting units encountered, but no one is completely sure as captured Chiwak

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refuse to answer questions about their species.

Alien Species and Social Standing

The Reticulan Empire considers all aliens to be second-class citizens. Therefore, when interacting with a Reticulan from the Empire, halve all non-Reticulan Social Standing scores (rounded down).

Ssesslessians have had a turbulent history with the Reticulans, the Empire destroyed their homeworld. Thus, any Reticulan, either from the Empire or the Technate, has their Social Standing halved (rounded up) when dealing with a Ssesslessian when outside Reticulan space.

Humans have a complicated relationship with the Reticulan Hybrids who were created by inserting some Reticulan genes into the human genome. Since the Empire used these Hybrids to control humanity under the old EFA government, prejudice still runs high, even though most humans recognize that Hybrids were not given a choice in their birth. ~~Hybrids possess an almost universally unpleasant appearance.~~ To humans they look vaguely like Reticulans and that invokes an almost instinctive reaction in normal humans. Most humans will automatically have an Unfriendly attitude towards these Hybrids, although this is overcome after an individual has interacted with the character for a few minutes, based on the character's personality and the circumstances of their interaction.

The Universal Persona Profile (UPP)

The Universal Persona Profile (UPP) is a concise format to encapsulate data on an individual character's characteristic scores in a manner that, with a little practice, can be quickly and easily read. The specifics of the Universal Persona Profile can be found below:

123456 or 123456-7 for psionic characters

The Explanation

The numbers represent the position of a pseudo-hexadecimal notation of an individual's characteristic scores. These scores are, in order:

1. **Strength** (STR)
2. **Dexterity** (DEX)
3. **Endurance** (END)
4. **Intelligence** (INT)
5. **Education** (EDU)
6. **Social Standing** (SOC)
7. **Psionic Strength** (PSI)

For example, if a character has the following characteristic scores:

Strength 6, Dexterity 8, Endurance 7, Intelligence 11, Education 9, Social Standing 12

Then the character's UPP would be 687B9C. If the character later tested for Psionics, and ended up with a Psionic Strength of 4, the UPP would then become 687B9C-4.

Background Skills

Before embarking on your careers, you get several background skills equal to 3 + your Education DM (1 to 5,

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depending on your Education score).

Homeworld Skills

Growing up on your homeworld gave you skills that depend on the planet's nature. You can select any skill that matches your homeworld's planetary description and trade codes. If you wish to play a character coming from one of the worlds detailed in Chapter 5 of this book, then consult those sources for the planet's description.

Law Level	Skill
0-7	Gun Combat-0
8-A	Melee Combat-0

Trade Code	Skills
Agricultural	Animals-0
Asteroid	Zero-G-0
Desert	Animals (Survival)-0
Fluid Oceans	Vehicle (Watercraft)-0
Garden	Animals-0
High Technology	Computer-0
High Population	Streetwise-0
Ice-Capped	Zero-G-0
Industrial	Broker-0
Low Technology	Animals (Survival)-0
Poor	Animals-0
Rich	Carousing-0
Water World	Vehicle (Watercraft)-0
Vacuum	Zero-G-0

Primary Education Skills

A formal education gives you a basic level of competence in various sciences and academic disciplines. Any character may choose from the following list:

Admin-0, Advocate-0, Animals-0, Carousing-0, Comms-0, Computer-0, Electronics-0, Engineering-0, Linguistics-0, Mechanics-0, Medicine-0, Sciences-0, Steward-0, Vehicle-0

New Rule – Terran Colonial Militia: Due to the long, protracted war for independence, the UTR insists that all healthy citizens receive basic militia training as part of their schooling, as well as periodic militia training if they are not in active military service. To represent this, all UTR characters will enter their first career with **both** Melee Combat-0 and Gun Combat-0 in addition to any other background skills, regardless of their homeworld's law level or the EDU characteristic.

Detailed Careers

Characters normally do not start at the age of majority and jump immediately into play with only their background skills. Instead, characters gain experience by pursuing one or more careers. The random nature of career paths (also known as prior history or prior careers) leads to characters of all levels of experience, and from all occupations. A character gains more skills the longer they stay in character creation, but not without risk of aging. Player choices will have great impact on the final disposition of a character.

At many points during a career, a character must make a throw of some sort. Most of these throws are

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characteristic throws – roll 2D6, add the DM from the listed characteristic, and try to get a total higher than the listed value. A throw of INT 8+ means ‘roll 2D6, add your Intelligence DM, and you succeed if you roll an 8 or more’. Some throws are skill checks, where you add any levels in that skill and the DM from an appropriate characteristic, if specified. For example, a throw of Gambling 8+ would mean ‘roll 2D6, add your Gambling skill and the DM from an appropriate characteristic such as Dexterity, if specified, and get over 8’.

Civilian Career Descriptions

The Cepheus Engine core rulebook provides details for several careers that are perfectly acceptable for use within the TSAO setting.

Athlete (CE33) – You have achieved celebrity status for your proficiency in sports or other forms of physical exercise.

Barbarian (CE33) – You are from a primitive world (TL4 or less) capable of surviving on your world without support from a technologically advanced civilization. Note: This career should be very rare in the TSAO setting.

Belter (CE33) – You explore asteroid belts and airless worlds in search of mineral deposits and salvageable material for profit.

Bureaucrat (CE33) – You are an official in a government department, charged with following the details of the administrative process.

Colonist (CE35) – You have moved to a new world or settled in a new planetary colony.

Diplomat (CE35) – You work for a planetary or interstellar government in conducting official negotiations and maintaining political, economic, and social relations with another polity or polities.

Drifter (CE35) – You continually move from place to place, without any fixed home or job.

Entertainer (CE35) – You have achieved celebrity status for your proficiency in publicly entertaining others.

Hunter (CE35) – You kill or trap large game, almost always large terrestrial mammals, for meat, other animal by-products (such as horn or bone), trophy, or sport.

Physician (CE37) – You are skilled in the science of medicine and are trained and licensed to treat sick and injured people.

Pirate (CE39) – You attack and steal from interplanetary and interstellar ships in space.

Rogue (CE39) – You make your living through illicit, or illegal, means.

Technician (CE39) – You are skilled in mechanical or industrial techniques, or in a specific technical field.

These Stars are Ours Career Descriptions

The following careers are specifically designed for the TSAO setting; these careers include “careers” for alien races, but aliens may also be Colonists or Technicians, for example, and as such are not restricted to the careers listed for their race.

Chiwak – You are a member of the Chiwak race, born to hunt, and currently at war with the Reticulan Empire. While other Chiwak careers exist, this career is what is seen by the Empire and her troops. While the Chiwak have military ranks in their own language, the Earth Expeditionary forces from the early 22nd Century translated their rank names into ones inspired by the Mongolian Horde, and these ranks are still used.

Cicek Female – You are a female Cicek. Taking a broader view than the competitive males, you keep the fabric of society working. Cicek females have no formal rank structure and may roll for two skills each term.

Cicek Male – You are a Cicek male, competing for your position amongst other males and always concerned about your Glory (represented by SOC). While Cicek males have no formal rank names, they do have a very rigid rank structure, at least among themselves.

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CRC-8/16 – You are a member of the Committee on Reconnaissance and Counter-Reconnaissance (CRC) Department 8 or 16; Terra's intelligence unit tasked with hunting down pro-Reticulan infiltrators and protecting the UTR from internal (CRC-16) or external (CRC-8) threats. Characters may select either the CRC-8 or CRC-16 department and may transfer between departments at the end of any term with a Qualification roll. The differences between the departments are only important when using the optional Event tables below.

CRC-32 – You are a member of the Committee on Reconnaissance and Counter-Reconnaissance (CRC) Department 32; Terra's psionic intelligence unit used to hunt down pro-Reticulan infiltrators and perform other government and military intelligence activities.

Elite – You are one of the movers or shakers of society; a corporate executive, celebrity, or government official.

Imperial Huscarl – You are one of the servitor species who serve the Reticulan Great Houses, most commonly House Thiragin, fight their wars, and protect the less war-like Reticulans from external enemies and you were used in inter-house conflicts. You may have fought against the UTR during the Terran Liberation War. We use here the common Terran translation of the Huscarl's rank structure, based on ancient Roman rank equivalents. The most elite Huscarl may join the Imperial Legion - the Empresses' own - which has very strict entry requirements. To become a member of the Imperial Legion, a human character must have STR, DEX, END, and INT of 7 or better. If at any time during their career any of these characteristics fall below 7, the character is medically discharged.

Merchant – You crew the ships of the huge trading corporations, work in the Terran Merchant Marine, or work as an independent free trader, carrying cargo and passengers between worlds.

Psychic Research Institute (PRI) – You are psion that works in non-military situations. You use your abilities to better humanity. The PRI was not formed until 2245; prior to that date, all PRI members were part of CRC-32. Transfer from CRC-32 to the PRI was automatic for anyone with a PSI strength lower than 8.

Reticulan Nobility – You are a member of the Reticulan nobility. Reticulan nobles run the corporations and are the major operators within the Houses, both Major and Minor. You must be a Reticulan with SOC 10+ to take this career. If at any time your SOC drops below 10, you automatically become a Prole. If a Reticulan Noble has SOC 12+, they are automatically tested for psionics.

Reticulan Prole – You are a Reticulan worker within the Empire. While you may conduct experiments, you also supervise the many alien workers in their tasks. If at any time your SOC becomes 10 or more, you automatically become a Noble.

Scout – You explore the galaxy, discovering new worlds to settle and contact new alien races or lost human colonies. Scouts have no formal rank structure and may roll two skills per term.

Ssesslessian – You are a member of the Ssesslessian species. In the long centuries of Reticulan subjugation, your ancestors were forced to operate as their assassins and special operations troops. The Ssesslessian rank structure is not well understood by other races, but humans have roughly translated their ranks following the ancient Assassins Guild structure. Most Ssesslessian characters are Outcasts.

Terran Army – You are a member of the UTR armed ground forces; a soldier dealing with planetary surface actions, battles, and campaigns. You either served in a local planetary army or in an expeditionary unit sent to fight on other worlds.

Terran Guard – You were one of the elite, volunteer forces that formed the wartime assault echelon of the UTR Army. You received advanced training and equipment to assault planetary targets from orbit. The Terran Guard was merged with the Naval Infantry in 2259 to form the new Terran Marines.

Terran Marines – You are a member of a new military force, just created last year by merging the Terran Naval Infantry and the Terran Guard.

Terran Naval Infantry – You were one of the armed fighting forces aboard naval starships. You dealt with boarding actions in space, defended starports and bases belonging to the Navy and supplement ground forces

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such as the army or Terran Guard. In 2259, the Naval Infantry was merged with the Terran Guard to form the Terran Marines.

Terran Navy – You are part of the UTR Navy fighting against humanity’s enemies and patrolling the space between the stars. You protect humanity from foreign powers and lawless elements in the interstellar trade routes.

Terran Police – You are a law enforcement officer. You keep the peace, and protect and serve the citizens. While each member world of the UTR has its own police force, the Ministry of Justice coordinates activities between jurisdictions.

Zhuzzh – You are one of the opportunistic Zhuzzh race. Your species is very good at tinkering. You often confuse trading with piracy and smuggling. Zhuzzh have no formal rank structure, but may roll two skills per term.

Qualifying and the Draft

The Qualification check determines if you can successfully enter your chosen career. Military careers use Enlistment as the description for this roll instead of qualification. If you fail this check then you cannot enter your chosen career this term. You must either submit to the Draft or take the Drifter career for this term. You suffer a DM–2 to qualification rolls for each previous career you have entered. Once you leave a career you cannot return to it. The Draft and the Drifter career are exceptions to this rule – you can be Drafted into a career you were previously in but got ejected from, and the Drifter career is always open. Aliens do not roll for the Draft, but may always return to their “alien career”.

1D6	Draft Career
1	Merchant
2	Terran Army
3	Terran Army
4	Terran Naval Infantry
5	Terran Navy
6	Scout

Note, the above Draft Career only applies to humans. All aliens are automatically drafted into their “racial” career, although they may still opt for the Drifter career.

Terms of Service

Each step through the cycle of resolving your career path, you will go through a term of service that lasts approximately four years long. This adds four years to the character’s age. Each time the character reenlists, or enters a new career, it is for another term, or four additional years of service.

Basic Training

On the first term of a new career, you gain Basic Training as you learn the basics for your chosen career. For your first career only, you get all the skills listed in the Service Skills table at Level 0 as your basic training. For any subsequent careers, you may pick any one skill listed in the Service Skills table at Level 0 as your basic training.

Survival

Each career has a survival roll. If you fail this roll, your character is dead, and you must create a new one. A natural 2 is always a failure.

War is Hell. The default rule is that a failed Survival roll leads to a character’s premature death. There is an optional rule allowing the character to survive with some consequences. TSAO takes place two years after the most brutal and bloody war in human history. If you wish to experience the full brutality of that war during character creation, use the default rule – on a failed Survival throw, the character dies. War is hell and brutal

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and people die. If you roll exactly the Survival number, your character survives, but must roll in the Injury table. Terrans in military service receive a Wound Star decoration in such a case as they were injured in the line of duty.

Optional Rule: A particularly merciful Referee may allow you to keep a character who fails a survival roll and roll on the Mishap table on p.112. This mishap is always enough to force you to leave your career after half a term, or two years of service. You lose the benefit roll for the current term only, unless stated otherwise on the table.

Commission and Advancement

Within military careers, a Commission check represents an opportunity to join the ranks of the commissioned officers. In non-military careers, the Commission check represents an opportunity to gain a position within the hierarchy common to your chosen career. Some careers do not have an established hierarchy, as such, and so do not offer Commission checks. A character that succeeds at a Commission roll becomes a Rank 1 officer in that career, and uses the officer Rank table from then on. In addition, you gain an extra roll on any of the Skills and Training Tables for this career. A character may attempt a Commission roll once per term, and trying for commission is optional. A draftee may not attempt a Commission check in the first term of service.

Each career that has a commission check also has an Advancement roll, representing your character's ability to advance with the ranks of your chosen career's hierarchy. If you are Rank 1 or higher, you may attempt an Advancement roll each term. If you are successful, then you move to the next rank and gain an extra roll on any of the Skills and Training Tables for this career. You also get any benefits listed for your new rank. You may only attempt to advance once per term, and you may attempt to advance in the same term in which you are commissioned.

In careers without Commissions and Advancements, a character rolls twice on the Skills and Training tables per term.

Skills and Training

Each career has skill tables associated with it – Personal Development, Service Skills, Specialist Skills, and Advanced Education. In each term, you spend in a career, pick one of these tables and roll 1D6 to see which skill you increase. You may only roll on the Advanced Education table if your character has Education 8+.

For careers that do not have commission or advancement checks, characters get to make two rolls for skills instead of one every term.

Cascade Skills

Some skills are “cascade skills” meaning that they have specializations – specialized forms of that skill. When a cascade skill is selected, the character must immediately decide on a specialization. Each cascade skill will list one or more specializations that may be chosen from. Upon taking a level in a cascade skill specialization, all other specializations of that skill without skill levels are treated as Zero-level skills. A character may have multiple specializations in a skill, such as Melee Combat (Natural Weapons)-2 and Melee Combat (Slashing Weapons)-1.

Optional Rule: Maximum Skills Learned. With longer lifespans, and longer careers, possible at higher tech levels, it is likely that a character could amass many, very well developed skills that could unbalance a game. We recommend that for any character, player or NPC of any race, the maximum number of skill levels cannot exceed the sum of their INT and EDU scores. Level-0 skills do not count against this limit and a character could have, theoretically, every skill at Level-0. Thus, if a character has an INT of 6 and an EDU of 8, they would be able to retain a maximum of 14 levels of skills.

If a character stays in a career long enough that they gain a number of skill levels that exceed this limit, the Player should wait until the end of character creation is completed and then reduce the skill levels of their learned skills until they get under the INT+EDU limit. Once skills are reduced to Level-0, they no longer count against the maximum and do not need to be reduced further (to unskilled). A skill reduced from some higher

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level to a lower level, even Level-0, represents a skill that the character knew well at a younger age, but through lack of use, has simple forgotten much of the details and specific knowledge that would be represented by the higher skill level. Characters may feel an “I used to know that” feeling when using these reduced skills.

Injuries

The Injury Table in the *Cepheus Engine* provides several options of injury during character generation. This table, however, does not account for the character’s Endurance, nor does it detail the nature of lasting injury behind general suggestions. The table below is an optional replacement of the standard Injury Table.

For more detailed results, make a Difficult (-2) (END) check and look for the Effect of that roll on the following table. The results of injury and the cost of correcting them (as Medical Debt in this case) are as given on page 129, Critical Injury and Replacements, except for characteristic damage which heals per the Medical Care rules.

Revised Injury Table

Effect	Result
-6 or less	Character critically injured with severe lasting implications. Roll 1D6: 1-2, character loses a leg; 3-4, character loses an arm; 5-6, character loses both eyes and is blinded.
-5 to -2	Character severely injured with lasting implications. Roll 1D6: 1-2, character loses a hand; 3-4, character loses one eye; 5-6, character suffers brain damage.
-1	Character is injured and heals badly, though all limbs and organs function normally. Reduce one physical characteristic by 1D6 and the two others by 2 each.
0	Character is injured and does not heal completely, though all limbs and organs function normally. Reduce any one physical characteristic by 2.
1 to 5	Character injured and suffers mild lasting injuries. Roll 1D6: 1-2, character is badly scarred; 3-4, character loses 1D3 fingers; 5-6, character loses most teeth.
6 or more	Lightly injured. No permanent effects.
DMs: -2 if in combat or deep exploration service; -1 if in the military; +0 if civilian.	

For the costs of replacing lost limbs and organs, consult the Augments section of this chapter, p.128.

Subsidized Cybernetics

If your character was injured in the service of a patron or organization, then a portion of their cybernetic replacements of lost limbs and organs may be paid for by that patron. Roll 2D6 on the table below, adding your Rank as a DM. The result is how much of your medical care is paid for by the employer.

Career	Roll of 4+	Roll of 8+	Roll of 12+
CRC-8/16/32, Imperial Legion, Reticulan Noble, Terran Army, Terran Marine, Terran Naval Infantry, Terran Navy, Terran Police, Scout	75%	100%	100%
Agent, Athlete, Bureaucrat, Cicek Female, Diplomat, Elite, Entertainer, Hunter, Mercenary, Merchant, PRI, Reticulan Prole, Physician, Pirate, Scientist, Ssesslessian, Technician, Terran Guard	50%	75%	100%
Barbarian, Belter, Cicek Male, Colonist, Drifter, Rogue, Zhuzzh	0%	50%	75%

Medical Debt

During the finishing touches to your character, you must pay any outstanding costs from medical care out of your Benefits before anything else. If you did not have enough money to pay for your cyber-surgery, you will start the game with a debt, which will affect your character at the Referee’s discretion.

Aging

The effects of aging begin when a character reaches a specific age (varies by species). At the end of that term, and at the end of every term thereafter (except for Reticulans, see below), the character must roll 2D6 on the Aging Table. Apply the character's total number of terms as a negative Dice Modifier on this table.

Alien races age at different rates than humans and how that aging affects rolls on the Aging table are described below. Most notably, Reticulans only add half the number of terms (rounded down) as a negative DM on this table due to their long lives.

2D6	Effects of Aging
-6	Reduce three physical characteristics by 2, reduce one mental characteristic by 1
-5	Reduce three physical characteristics by 2.
-4	Reduce two physical characteristics by 2, reduce one physical characteristic by 1
-3	Reduce one physical characteristic by 2, reduce two physical characteristics by 1
-2	Reduce three physical characteristics by 1
-1	Reduce two physical characteristics by 1
0	Reduce one physical characteristic by 1
1+	No effect

Optional Rule: Technology and Aging. As the tech level improves, overall health improves too, therefore we believe that to account for the effects of advanced medicine on longevity, the following table should be used to apply DM's to any rolls on the Aging table for any race based on the tech level of the character's homeworld.

Tech Level	Aging Roll Modifier
0	-3
1-2	-2
3-5	-1
6-8	+0
9-11	+1
12-14	+2
15+	+3

Aging Crisis

If any characteristic is reduced to 0 by aging, then the character suffers an aging crisis. The character dies unless he can pay 1D6xCr10000 for medical care, which will bring any characteristics back up to 1. The character automatically fails any Qualification checks from now on – they must either continue in the career they are in or become a Drifter if they wish to take any more terms.

Aliens and Aging

Chiwak begin their careers at age 14 and start rolling for aging when they reach 34 years of age, after 5 terms and must end their pre-careers after 8 terms.

Cicek start their careers at age 14 and being rolling for aging at 30, after 4 terms and must leave their pre-careers after 6 terms.

Humans begin their careers at 18 and must roll for aging when they reach 34 years of age, after 4 terms. Normally humans must stop their pre-careers after 7 terms.

Reticulans start their careers at the age of 26 and begin aging only at age 50, at the end of 6 terms. Afterwards, they make an Aging table roll only every *two* terms (8 years) and their DM is equal to half their number of terms.

Reticulan Hybrids begin their careers at age 18, but do not fully mature until 22. They begin rolling for aging at age 38, after 5 terms. Hybrids must top their pre-careers after 8 terms.

Ssesslessians begin their careers at age 18. They must make aging rolls after age 38, their 5th term, but have a +2 DM on their rolls. They must stop their pre-careers after 9 terms.

Zhuzzh start their careers at age 10 and must roll for aging at age 22, after 3 terms. They must stop their pre-careers after 5 terms.

Anagathics

The only available form of anagathic in the TSAO universe is a longevity treatment provided only to Reticulan nobility. When a Reticulan reaches SOC 12+, they automatically gain access to anagathics. In this setting, once a character receives the one-time anagathic treatment, they no longer roll on the Aging table.

Anagathics in this setting work differently than the standard anagathics in the Cepheus Engine (*CE30-31*). In this setting, the anagathic treatment is a one-time treatment taking about one week at a Reticulan medical facility. Afterwards, the character does not age for 1D3x100 years. The treatment cannot be repeated. Once the treatment wears off, the person will age very quickly and die within 2D3 weeks. One visible side effect is that the skin of the Reticulan Noble takes on a green hue. There are likely other side effects, but the Reticulans do not share them.

The detail of how the anagathic treatments are formulated is a close-kept secret of the Reticulan Nobility. Only Imperial Reticulans of SOC 12+ have access to anagathics. Members of the Reticulan Technate reject the use of anagathics as being counter-productive to a meritocratic society.

Reenlistment and Retirement

At the end of each term, the character must decide if they wish to continue their career path or if they wish to muster out. If continuation is desired, the character must make a successful Reenlistment check as listed for their current profession or service. If the character rolls a natural 12, they cannot leave their current career and must continue for another term. If the check is not successful, then they cannot reenlist and the character must leave their current career.

A character who has served 7 or more terms (for humans) in character creation must retire and cannot undertake any more prior experience, unless they roll a natural 12 during Reenlistment and must serve another term of service. Details of the maximum terms that aliens may serve are described in the Aliens section above.

Optional Rule: The Referee may want to change the maximum number of terms spent in character creation from 7 to something else. For example, the Referee may feel that characters built up to a maximum of 3 or even 4 terms are in the prime of their life, but not so experienced that they won't take up adventuring opportunities as they are presented.

Optional Rule: The Referee may allow a character to stay in their career for a number of terms equal to 5 + their Rank. Thus, higher ranking characters are "allowed" to stay in their careers longer.

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Optional Rule: The Referee may elect to totally remove the maximum number of terms spent in character creation.

Due to the longer inherent life-spans in the TSAO setting, we suggest using a modified retirement plan. A character who has served 7 or more terms in a single service receives a yearly retirement pension, even if they later become an adventurer. Aliens use the maximum number of character terms listed in their racial descriptions above.

Terms	Annual Retirement Pay
7	Cr10000
8	Cr12000
9	Cr14000
10	Cr16000
11+	+Cr2000 per term beyond 10

Mustering Out Benefits

Characters who end their careers receive one benefit per term served in which they did not lose benefits. An additional benefit is gained if the character held rank O4, and two for rank O5. A character with rank O6 gains three extra benefits.

Cash Benefits

A character may take up to 3 benefit rolls on the Cash table. All others must be taken in material benefits. Characters with Gambling skill or who have retired (7 or more terms) gain +1 on Cash Benefit rolls.

Material Benefits

Material benefits may be characteristics alterations, passages, or ship shares. Membership in the Explorers' Society is possible, and subsequent receipts of weapon benefits may be taken as skill levels instead. Note that characters of rank O5 or O6 gain +1 on Material Benefit rolls.

- **Augment:** As a member of the House Huscarls or the Imperial Legion, you have been upgraded with a cybernetic augment. See page128 for details. The character may select any Augment up to the price of Cr10000. Multiple rolls of this benefit allow the character to have multiple augments, or a more expensive augment.
- **Courier Vessel:** The Scout Service places the character on detached duty with the scout service, and has been granted the use of a surplus, 30-year-old, 100-ton Courier ship (*CE139*) on a reserve basis. If a group of characters are adventuring together, this benefit can only be gained once, and additional rolls of this benefit either by the owning character or by other party members can be used to reduce the age of the ship by 10 years, or allow improvements (not to exceed MCr1.0 each) to the ship. Note that the Old Ship rules of Chapter 4 apply, using the Military table. The scout exploration service also provides free maintenance and fuel at any scout base. All other ship expenses are the responsibility of the character. While the character is at liberty to use the vessel as they see fit, the vessel still belongs to the scout exploration service, and thus cannot be abandoned or sold without consequences. In exchange for the use of the ship, the character and the ship are both considered to be available to return to active duty at a moment's notice, should the scout exploration service have need.
- **Explorers Society:** The character is a member of the prestigious, multi-species Explorers Society. The Explorers Society will provide members with a free high passage ticket every two months, plus access to the Society's information network and Society-run resorts. This benefit can only be received once; any further receipt of this has no additional benefit. After character creation, characters may purchase

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membership into the Explorers' Society. A successful application for lifetime membership requires a Routine (-2) Admin check modified by the character's Social Standing, and if accepted, a payment of Cr1000000. Failure on the application process indicates the character has been black listed. If a character has been black listed, the Explorers' Society will no longer accept membership applications from them. Membership is non-refundable and non-transferrable. The Explorers Society is a recent development Terra and her allies (Terrans, Cicek, Ssesslessian, and Reticulan Technate).

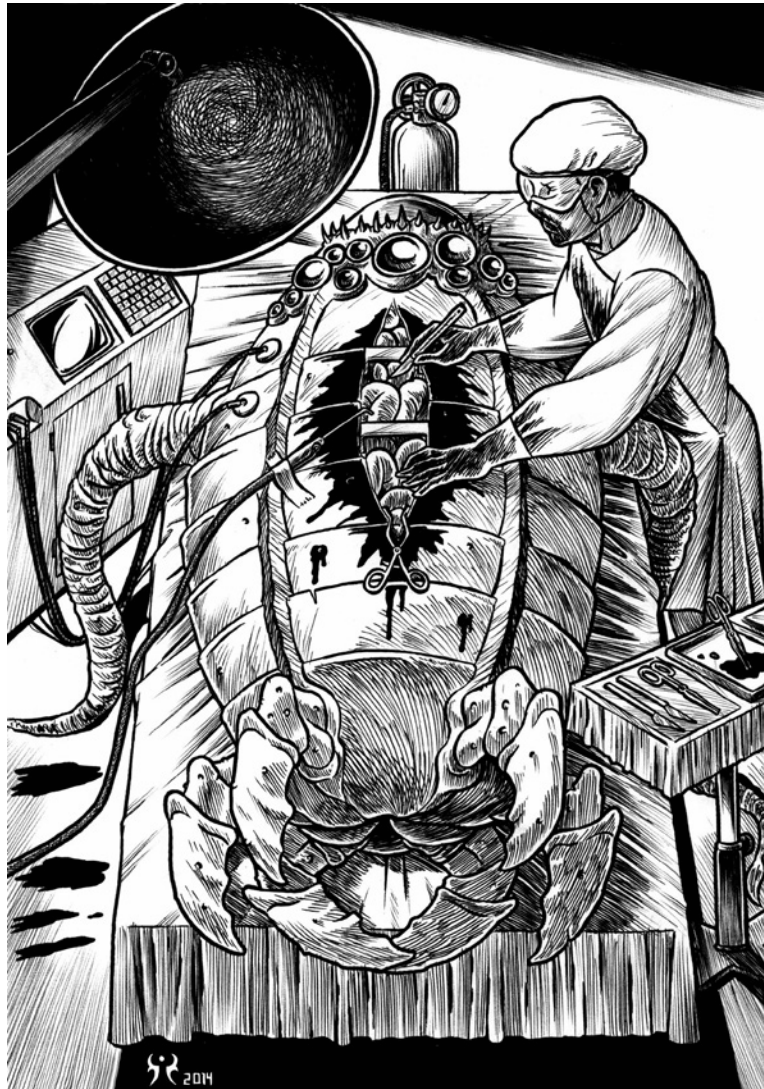
- **Frigate:** You receive a share of a 30-year-old, 300-ton Patrol Frigate (*CE142*). If a group of characters are adventuring together, this benefit can only be gained once, additional rolls of this benefit can be used to reduce the age of the ship by 10 years, or allow improvements (not to exceed MCr1.0 each) to the ship. Note that the Old Ship rules of Chapter 4 apply, using the Military table. Note that this ship suits the character's species: Chiwak receive a Chiwak Frigate while Terrans receive a Terran Patrol Frigate.
- **Infiltrator:** You receive the use of an Infiltrator (see Chapter 4, page 144). Note that the Infiltrator still belongs to the Ssesslessian Harmony, and that it may obligate you to undertake mission on its behalf from time to time. If a group of characters are adventuring together, this benefit can only be gained once, additional rolls of this benefit can be used to reduce the age of the ship or allow improvements (not to exceed MCr1.0 each) to the ship. Note that the ship is 1D3 decades old, and the Old Ship rules from Chapter 4 apply, using the Military table.
- **Trader:** The character is a partner in a 200-ton Merchant Trader (*CE142*). If a group of characters are adventuring together, this benefit can only be gained once, additional rolls of this benefit can be used to reduce the age of the ship by 10 years, or allow improvements (not to exceed MCr1.0 each) to the ship. Note that the ship is 40 years old, and the Old Ship rules from Chapter 4 apply, using the Civilian table.
- **Passage:** The character receives a single ticket of the type named (low, mid, high) for travel on a starship. It is good for one trip to any destination, maximum of 4 parsecs.
- **Raider:** You gain control of a Raider ship – a common Cicek vessel used for combat, piracy, exploration, and commerce (see Chapter 4, page 153). If a group of characters are adventuring together, this benefit can only be gained once, additional rolls of this benefit can be used to reduce the age of the ship or allow improvements (not to exceed MCr1.0 each) to the ship. Note that the ship is 1D3 decades old, and the Old Ship rules from Chapter 4 apply, using the Military table.
- **Reserve Ship:** As part of the post-war demobilization effort, the United Terran Republic decommissioned and sold off many ships. However, the Terran Naval High Command prefers to maintain a good level of readiness for future conflict, without having to keep many ships – most of which are not necessary today – under its maintenance. The two options available to save costs in this case are mothballing or putting the ship on reserve. Mothballing means storing the ship, powered down, in a naval storage facility, typically without significant maintenance. Reserve means providing the ship to “reliable parties”, that is, retired or honorably discharged Terran military officers for their own use.

When receiving this Benefit, the character has full use of the ship without paying for its purchase, but the ship remains property of the Terran Navy and can be recalled into active duty when necessary – along with its crew. The Navy expects the operators to pay for all operational expenses and keep the ship in good shape.

The ship received is subject to Referee discretion and is not a full-scale naval vessel, but rather

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an auxiliary, military transport, or second-line combatant. A good candidate is the *Shaka*-class Light Military Transport described in Chapter 4, page 146— as the Navy has operated many of them as Naval auxiliaries. Multiple rolls of this Benefit should improve the quality of the vessel provided or reduce the age by 10 years, up to a brand-new ship, produced just before the end of the war. If a group of characters are adventuring together, this ship can only be gained once, additional rolls of this benefit can be used to reduce the age of the ship or allow improvements (not to exceed MCr.1.0 each) to the ship. Note that the ship is 1D3 decades old, and the Old Ship rules from Chapter 4 apply, using the Military table.



- **Research Vessel:** A scientific foundation, an interstellar corporation or some other equally affluent patron has granted the character the use of a 200-ton Research Vessel (*CE143*). The character is responsible for all ship expenses, other than annual maintenance. Note, the ship is 1D3 decades old. If a group of characters are adventuring together, this benefit can only be gained once, additional rolls of this benefit can be used to reduce the age of the ship by a decade or allow small improvements (not to exceed MCr.1.0 each) to the ship. This ship still belongs to the patron, and therefore the character cannot sell or abandon it without consequences.
- **Saucer:** You receive a Civilian Saucer (see Chapter 4, page 141). If you roll this Benefit again, you may upgrade to a Military Saucer or gain a Level of Pilot (small craft). Additional rolls of this benefit can be used to reduce the age of the ship or allow small improvements (not to exceed MCr.1.0 each) to the

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ship. Note that the ship is 1D3 decades old, and the Old Ship rules from Chapter 4 apply. Note: unlike other ship benefits, multiple Reticulans may each gain her Saucer.

- **Ship Shares:** A character may receive ship shares as benefits. Each ship share is worth approximately MCr2 toward the purchase of a vessel. You may purchase a starship for one-fifth of its base value with a 40-year loan attached to it. For every one-fifth of its base value that is paid to the bank in either ship shares or cash, the period of the loan is reduced by ten years. Ship shares may not be redeemed for cash.
- **Weapon:** The character leaves the service with an appropriate weapon (gun or blade). Once a weapon is taken as a benefit, additional receipts of the weapon may be taken as skill in that weapon instead. An individual is always free to take additional physical examples of weapons instead of skill levels, if so desired.
- **Yacht:** The character receives a 100-ton Yacht (*CE145*) for their use. They are responsible for all costs and maintenance. The yacht was provided by a corporation or the government and may occasionally ask for the owner to perform a small favor for them. If a group of characters are adventuring together, this benefit can only be gained once, additional rolls of this benefit can be used to reduce the age of the ship or allow small improvements (not to exceed MCr1.0 each) to the ship. Note that the ship is 1D3 decades old, and the Old Ship rules from Chapter 4 apply, using the Civilian table.

Allies and Enemies

We introduce two new concepts when rolling on Mishap, Event, or Mustering Out tables: **Ally** and **Enemy**. These people represent contacts that the character has developed, for good or ill, during their lives. An Ally may be a close friend or relative who may be willing to help the character from time to time. An Enemy is someone that feels the character has done them wrong, real or imagined, and wants revenge. The details of the Ally or Enemy are left to the Referee and Player. Allies and Enemies should not be a crutch for play, but should represent someone from the characters past who appears from time to time.

TSAO Career Tables

The following tables should be used to create characters using the 16 additional careers for the TSAO setting.

Career	Chiwak	Cicek Female	Cicek Male	CRC-8/16
Qualifications	Any Chiwak	Any Cicek Female	Any Cicek Male	INT 6+
Survival	END 6+	INT 5+	END 7+	INT 6+
Commission	INT 7+	-	INT 6+	EDU 7+
Advancement	DEX 6+	-	SOC 5+	INT 6+
Re-Enlistment	5+	4+	5+	5+
Ranks and Skills				
0	Hunter (Gun Combat-1)	- (Admin-1)	Omega (Melee Combat-1)	Agent (Gun Combat-1)
1	Arban	-	Zeta	Field Agent
2	Zuun	-	Epsilon	Senior Agent
3	Mingghan (Leadership-1)	-	Delta (Leadership-1)	Special Agent (Leadership-1)
4	Tumen	-	Gamma	Sr. Special Agent
5	Kheshig	-	Beta	Assistant Director
6	Khan	-	Alpha	Director
Material Benefits				
1	+1 INT	Low Passage	+1 SOC	Low Passage
2	Weapon	+1 EDU	Mid Passage	+1 INT
3	Mid Passage	Mid Passage	Weapon	Weapon
4	High Passage	+1 INT	High Passage	High Passage
5	Weapon	Ally	+1 INT	+1 SOC
6	Ally	Ship Share	Ally	Ally
7	Frigate	-	Raider	Explorers Society

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Cash Benefits				
1	500	1000	1000	1000
2	1000	5000	1000	2000
3	5000	10000	2000	5000
4	10000	20000	5000	8000
5	20000	30000	5000	10000
6	30000	50000	10000	20000
7	50000	100000	20000	50000

Career	Chiwak	Cicek Female	Cicek Male	CRC-8/16
Skills and Training	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development
1	+1 STR	+1 DEX	+1 STR	+1 DEX
2	+1 DEX	+1 END	+1 DEX	+1 END
3	+1 END	+1 INT	+1 END	+1 INT
4	Athletics	+1 EDU	+1 SOC	Athletics
5	Animals	Carousing	Athletics	Carousing
6	Melee Combat	Steward	Melee Combat	Gun Combat
	Service Skills	Service Skills	Service Skills	Service Skills
1	Athletics	Admin	Animals	Melee Combat
2	Gun Combat	Animals	Athletics	Gun Combat
3	Gunnery	Comms	Gun Combat	Recon
4	Melee Combat	Gun Combat	Melee Combat	Stealth
5	Recon	Liaison	Recon	Streetwise
6	Vehicle	Steward	Vehicle	Vehicle
	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills
1	Athletics	Broker	Athletics	Admin
2	Comms	Electronics	Comms	Advocate
3	Electronics	Mechanics	Demolitions	Bribery
4	Gun Combat	Medicine	Gun Combat	Comms
5	Mechanic	Steward	Melee Combat	Electronics
6	Stealth	Vehicle	Tactics	Recon
	Adv. Education	Adv. Education	Adv. Education	Adv. Education
1	Animals	Broker	Broker	Advocate
2	Demolitions	Computer	Leadership	Comms
3	Leadership	Engineering	Navigation	Demolitions
4	Medicine	Jack-of-all-Trades	Piloting	Linguistics
5	Recon	Linguistics	Recon	Medicine
6	Tactics	Sciences	Tactics	Zero-G

NOTE: If you are non-human psionic, you may use **one** skill roll per term and take it as a *Talent* skill.

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Career	CRC-32	Elite	Imperial Huscular	Merchant
Qualifications	Automatic at PSI 8+	Automatic at SOC 10+	END 7+	INT 5+
Survival	END 7+	SOC 4+	END 7+	INT 5+
Commission	INT 6+	EDU 7+	EDU 6+	EDU 5+
Advancement	EDU 5+	INT 8+	INT 7+	SOC 7+
Re-Enlistment	4+	6+	6+	5+
Ranks and Skills				
0	Private (<i>Talent</i> -1)	Analyst (Admin-1)	Soldier (Gun Combat-1)	Crewman (Steward-1)
1	Lieutenant	Supervisor	Optio	4 th Officer
2	Captain	Manager	Centurion	3 rd Officer
3	Major (Advocate-1)	Director (Liaison-1)	Primus (Tactics-1)	2 nd Officer (Pilot-1)
4	Colonel	Managing Director	Prefect	1 st Officer
5	Brigadier	Vice President	Procurator	Captain
6	General	President	Legate	Admiral
Material Benefits				
1	Mid Passage	Mid Passage	Mid Passage	Low Passage
2	+1 PSI	+1 EDU	+1 INT	+1 EDU
3	Weapon	+1 SOC	Weapon	Weapon
4	High Passage	High Passage	Ally	High Passage
5	+1 INT	Ally	+1 EDU	+1 SOC
6	Ally	Explorers Society	Augment	Ally
7	Explorers Society	Yacht	Augment	Trader
Cash Benefits				
1	1000	2000	1000	1000
2	2000	10000	1000	5000
3	5000	20000	2000	10000
4	10000	40000	5000	20000
5	20000	50000	5000	30000
6	50000	100000	10000	50000
7	100000	200000	20000	100000

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Career	CRC-32	Elite	Imperial Huscarl	Merchant
Skills and Training	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development
1	+1 DEX	+1 STR	+1 STR	+1 STR
2	+1 END	+1 DEX	+1 DEX	+1 DEX
3	+1 INT	+1 END	+1 END	+1 END
4	+1 PSI	Gun Combat	Gambling	Gun Combat
5	Athletics	Gambling	Melee Combat	Melee Combat
6	Carousing	Melee Combat	Zero-G	Zero-G
	Service Skills	Service Skills	Service Skills	Service Skills
1	Talent	Admin	Animals	Broker
2	Athletics	Advocate	Battle Dress	Comms
3	Gun Combat	Carousing	Comms	Admin
4	Melee Combat	Comms	Gun Combat	Steward
5	Talent	Leadership	Melee Combat	Vehicle
6	Vehicle	Vehicle	Vehicle	Zero-G
	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills
1	Admin	Advocate	Gun Combat	Engineering
2	Animals	Animals	Gunnery	Gunnery
3	Comms	Carousing	Gravitics	Gravitics
4	Electronics	Athletics	Recon	Leadership
5	Streetwise	Liaison	Vehicle	Navigation
6	Talent	Melee Combat	Zero-G	Piloting
	Adv. Education	Adv. Education	Adv. Education	Adv. Education
1	Advocate	Admin	Liaison	Advocate
2	Broker	Broker	Engineering	Broker
3	Computer	Computer	Linguistics	Linguistics
4	Jack-of-All-Trades	Liaison	Medicine	Medicine
5	Leadership	Linguistics	Sciences	Sciences
6	Medicine	Sciences	Tactics	Liaison

1. NOTE: *Talent* is a skill for psionic characters allowing them to increase any one of their previously rolled psionic skills by one.

2. NOTE: If you are non-human psionic, you may use **one** skill roll per term and take it as a *Talent* skill.

These Stars Are Ours!

Career	PRI	Reticulan Noble	Reticulan Prole	Scout
Qualifications	Automatic at PSI 2+	Automatic at SOC 10+	Any Reticulan	INT 5+
Survival	INT 5+	SOC 5+	INT 5+	END 6+
Commission	EDU 7+	INT 5+	EDU 6+	-
Advancement	INT 6+	EDU 8+	INT 7+	-
Re-Enlistment	5+	5+	4+	5+
Ranks and Skills				
0	Mediator (Advocate-1)	Equesa (Admin-1)	Worker (Computer-1)	(Piloting-1)
1	Arbitrator	Baronissa	Petite	-
2	Conciliator	Comitissa	Moyenne	-
3	Councilor (Admin-1)	Marchionessa (Liaison-1)	Grande (Leadership-1)	-
4	Diplomat	Proregina	Haute	-
5	Negotiator	Ducissa	Burgess	-
6	Speaker	Principissa	Equesa	-
Material Benefits				
1	Low Passage	High Passage	Mid Passage	Mid Passage
2	+1 EDU	+1 SOC	+1 EDU	+1 EDU
3	+1 INT	High Passage	High Passage	Weapon
4	+1 PSI	+1 EDU	+1 INT	Ally
5	Ally	Ally	+1 SOC	Explorers Society
6	High Passage	Saucer	Ally	Courier
7	Explorers Society	Saucer	Saucer	-
Cash Benefits				
1	1000	5000	1000	1000
2	2000	10000	2000	5000
3	5000	20000	5000	5000
4	10000	50000	10000	10000
5	20000	100000	20000	10000
6	50000	100000	50000	20000
7	100000	200000	100000	50000

These Stars Are Ours!

Career	PRI	Reticulan Noble	Reticulan Prole	Scout
Skills and Training	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development
1	+1 DEX	+1 STR	+1 STR	+1 STR
2	+1 INT	+1 DEX	+1 DEX	+1 DEX
3	+1 PSI	+1 END	+1 END	+1 END
4	Melee Combat	+1 SOC	+1 INT	+1 EDU
5	Carousing	Carousing	+1 EDU	Melee Combat
6	Gun Combat	Gun Combat	Gun Combat	Jack o' Trades
	Service Skills	Service Skills	Service Skills	Service Skills
1	Admin	Admin	Admin	Animals
2	Comms	Advocate	Comms	Comms
3	Steward	Comms	Electronics	Gun Combat
4	Streetwise	Liaison	Recon	Mechanics
5	Talent	Sciences	Sciences	Piloting
6	Vehicle	Vehicle	Vehicle	Zero-G
	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills
1	Animals	Advocate	Broker	Electronics
2	Bribery	Computer	Computer	Engineering
3	Liaison	Leadership	Gravitics	Gunnery
4	Leadership	Liaison	Medicine	Navigation
5	Admin	Medicine	Recon	Recon
6	Talent	Sciences	Sciences	Vehicle
	Adv. Education	Adv. Education	Adv. Education	Adv. Education
1	Advocate	+1 SOC	+1 SOC	Admin
2	Computer	Advocate	Electronics	Computer
3	Linguistics	Computer	Engineering	Linguistics
4	Medicine	Leadership	Gravitics	Medicine
5	Sciences	Medicine	Navigation	Navigation
6	Talent	Sciences	Piloting	Sciences

1. NOTE: *Talent* is a skill for psionic characters allowing them to increase any one of their previously rolled psionic skills by one.

2. NOTE: If you are non-human psionic, you may use **one** skill roll per term and take it as a *Talent* skill.

These Stars Are Ours!

Career	Ssesslessian	Terran Army	Terran Guard	Terran Marines
Qualifications	Any Ssesslessian	END 4+	END 7+	INT 6+
Survival	DEX 6+	DEX 5+	DEX 7+	END 6+
Commission	STR 7+	EDU 7+	INT 6+	EDU 6+
Advancement	INT 6+	EDU 7+	EDU 7+	SOC 7+
Re-Enlistment	5+	5+	7+	6+
Ranks and Skills				
0	Adherent (Stealth-1)	Private (Gun Combat-1)	Guardsmen (Battle Dress-1)	Marine (Battle Dress-1)
1	Companion	Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Lieutenant
2	Great Companion	Captain	Captain	Captain
3	Propagandist (Gun Combat-1)	Major (Leadership-1)	Major (Leadership-1)	Major (Tactics-1)
4	Great Propagandist	Colonel	Colonel	Colonel
5	Master	Brigadier	Brigadier	Brigadier
6	Grandmaster	General	General	General
Material Benefits				
1	Low Passage	Low Passage	Low Passage	High Passage
2	+1 EDU	+1 INT	+1 INT	+1 EDU
3	+1 INT	Weapon	Weapon	Weapon
4	Weapon	High Passage	High Passage	Ally
5	High Passage	+1 SOC	+1 SOC	+1 SOC
6	Ally	Ally	Ally	Explorers Society
7	Infiltrator	Explorers Society	Reserve Ship	Reserve Ship
Cash Benefits				
1	1000	1000	1000	1000
2	5000	5000	5000	5000
3	10000	10000	10000	10000
4	10000	10000	20000	10000
5	20000	20000	20000	20000
6	50000	50000	50000	50000
7	50000	50000	100000	100000

These Stars Are Ours!

Career	Ssesslessian	Terran Army	Terran Guard	Terran Marines
Skills and Training	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development
1	+1 DEX	+1 STR	+1 STR	+1 STR
2	+1 END	+1 DEX	+1 DEX	+1 DEX
3	+1 INT	+1 END	+1 END	+1 END
4	Athletics	Athletics	Athletics	+1 INT
5	Animals	Gambling	Carousing	+1 EDU
6	Carousing	Melee Combat	Zero-G	Gambling
	Service Skills	Service Skills	Service Skills	Service Skills
1	Advocate	Melee Combat	Tactics	Battle Dress
2	Animals	Carousing	Battle Dress	Comms
3	Gun Combat	Gunnery	Gun Combat	Demolitions
4	Melee Combat	Gun Combat	Gunnery	Gun Combat
5	Recon	Mechanics	Melee Combat	Gunnery
6	Zero-G	Vehicle	Recon	Melee Combat
	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills
1	Comms	Comms	Battle Dress	Animals
2	Demolitions	Gunnery	Comms	Electronics
3	Electronics	Animals	Demolitions	Gun Combat
4	Mechanics	Liaison	Gravitics	Melee Combat
5	Tactics	Recon	Medicine	Recon
6	Vehicle	Vehicle	Vehicle	Vehicle
	Adv. Education	Adv. Education	Adv. Education	Adv. Education
1	Admin	Admin	Admin	Admin
2	Computer	Demolitions	Computer	Computer
3	Liaison	Engineering	Electronics	Gravitics
4	Linguistics	Medicine	Leadership	Medicine
5	Medicine	Sciences	Medicine	Navigation
6	Sciences	Tactics	Tactics	Tactics

These Stars Are Ours!

Career	Terran Naval Infantry	Terran Navy	Terran Police	Zhuzzh
Qualifications	INT 6+	INT 6+	SOC 6+	Any Zhuzzh
Survival	END 7+	INT 5+	INT 5+	INT 5+
Commission	EDU 6+	SOC 7+	EDU 7+	-
Advancement	SOC 7+	EDU 6+	EDU 6+	-
Re-Enlistment	6+	5+	5+	4+
Ranks and Skills				
0	Soldier (Zero-G-1)	Spacer (Zero-G-1)	Constable (Streetwise-1)	-
1	Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Inspector	-
2	Lt. Commander	Lt. Commander	Chief Inspector	-
3	Commander (Tactics-1)	Commander (Piloting-1)	Superintendent (Advocate-1)	-
4	Captain	Captain	Commander	-
5	Commodore	Commodore	Brigadier	-
6	Admiral	Admiral	General	-
Material Benefits				
1	Mid Passage	Mid Passage	Mid Passage	Low Passage
2	+1 EDU	+1 EDU	+1 INT	+1 INT
3	Weapon	High Passage	Weapon	Weapon
4	High Passage	+1 SOC	High Passage	Mid Passage
5	+1 SOC	Ally	+1 SOC	Ally
6	Ally	Explorers Society	Ally	1D6 Ship Shares
7	Reserve Ship	Reserve Ship	Explorers Society	-
Cash Benefits				
1	1000	1000	1000	1000
2	5000	5000	5000	5000
3	10000	10000	10000	5000
4	10000	20000	10000	5000
5	20000	20000	20000	10000
6	50000	50000	50000	20000
7	50000	50000	50000	50000

These Stars Are Ours!

Career	Terran Naval Infantry	Terran Navy	Terran Police	Zhuzzh
Skills and Training	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development
1	+1 STR	+1 DEX	+1 DEX	+1 STR
2	+1 DEX	+1 END	+1 END	+1 DEX
3	+1 END	+1 EDU	+1 INT	+1 END
4	+1 EDU	Athletics	+1 EDU	Athletics
5	Athletics	Carousing	Athletics	Gun Combat
6	Carousing	Gambling	Carousing	Zero-G
	Service Skills	Service Skills	Service Skills	Service Skills
1	Battle Dress	Comms	Admin	Comms
2	Comms	Gun Combat	Advocate	Broker
3	Gun Combat	Gunnery	Comms	Gunnery
4	Gunnery	Engineering	Gun Combat	Mechanics
5	Melee Combat	Mechanics	Streetwise	Piloting
6	Recon	Vehicle	Vehicle	Zero-G
	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills	Specialist Skills
1	Animals	Gravitics	Animals (survival)	Liaison
2	Electronics	Engineering	Bribery	Gravitics
3	Gun Combat	Leadership	Computer	Jack o' Trades
4	Melee Combat	Admin	Gun Combat	Engineering
5	Vehicle	Navigation	Melee Combat	Navigation
6	Zero-G	Piloting	Recon	Piloting
	Adv. Education	Adv. Education	Adv. Education	Adv. Education
1	Admin	Advocate	Admin	Advocate
2	Computer	Computer	Computer	Engineering
3	Gravitics	Jack o' Trades	Leadership	Medicine
4	Medicine	Medicine	Liaison	Navigation
5	Piloting	Navigation	Linguistics	Recon
6	Tactics	Tactics	Medicine	Tactics

NOTE: If you are a Zhuzzh psionic, you may use **one** skill roll per term and take it as a *Talent* skill.

Advanced Career Options

While the basic career process can generate a wide variety of characters for game play, we believe that the following additional options will greatly increase the background story and playability of characters. So, while the following section is entirely optional, we **strongly encourage** players and Referees to incorporate these rules into character creation.

Medals and Decorations

Various governments reward their citizens for acts of heroism, bravery, or outstanding achievement with medals and ribbons. A character may earn the following medals in Advanced Character Creation Events or during active campaigns. Governments grant most decorations to military personnel, but there are civilian decorations as well. Most of these medals, except for the Wound Star, refer to the Event Advanced rules.

Going for Glory

For those individuals that are willing to take extra risks for greater reward, they may 'go for glory' by taking a negative DM on their Survival roll and take the equivalent positive DM on their Event skill check or characteristic roll.

United Terran Republic

The United Terran Republic rewards acts of heroism with the following medals and ribbons. In general, enlisted awards are silver and officer awards are gold in color.

Wound Star – A wound star is awarded any time a military character is injured in the line of duty, represented as a roll on the Injury table. Additional awards of this medal are signified with additional stars added to the ribbon.

Combat Service Ribbon – Awarded any time a military character is involved in a combat situation; in character creation, this is represented by a skill or characteristic roll in a combat Event. This award is not made every time a soldier fires their weapon, but in situations where their life is placed in danger or there is a major battle.

Order of Gaia – Outstanding achievements outside of the line of fire, such as prominent professional excellence or significant scientific discoveries, are rewarded with the Order of Gaia medal. Any character – not only those in active military service – who makes a skill check or characteristic roll in a non-combat event with an Effect of 5 or more may earn this medal. This medal gives the recipient a +2 DM on their next Advancement or Commission roll.

Hero of Terran Reconstruction – The greatest scientific and technical minds of the UTR may receive this medal, which is the highest civilian honor granted to Terrans. Any character – not only those in active military service – who makes a skill check or characteristic roll in a non-combat Event with an Effect of 8 or more may earn this medal. This medal gives the recipient an automatic Commission or a +4 DM on their next Advancement roll.

Medal of Distinguished Service – Awarded any time a soldier succeeds in a skill check or characteristic roll in a combat Event with an Effect of 3 or more. Characters awarded the MDS are not normally awarded the Combat Service Ribbon Service for the same Event. In normal service, this medal is awarded for “acts of heroism or bravery in the face of danger”.

Medal of Courage – Awarded any time a soldier makes a skill check or characteristics roll in a combat Event with an Effect of 5 or more. This medal gives the recipient a +2 DM on their next Advancement or Commission roll. This medal is only awarded for “distinguished acts of heroism or bravery in face of danger”.

Hero of Terra – The Hero of Terra medal is the highest decoration awarded by the UTR to its soldiers. It is awarded any time a military character makes a skill check or characteristic roll in a combat Event with an Effect of 7 or more. This medal gives the recipient an automatic Commission **and** a +4 DM on their next Advancement roll. This medal is awarded for “extreme acts of heroism or bravery in the face of extreme danger” during the War. This medal is usually awarded posthumously.

Cicek

Cicek females do not use medals. Males collect Trophies rather than medals. A male will wear a Trophy from a major coup. Below we provide examples of Trophies, but this list is far from exhaustive. A Cicek male may use each Trophy once in character generation, and it provides a +1 DM to a Commission or Advancement roll; multiple Trophies may not be used on the same roll.

Trophy of Defeated Enemy – Whenever a Cicek defeats another person in combat, they take a trophy; this trophy can take the form of a finger, ear, length of hair, or a personal item from the loser. Cicek males earn this Trophy – representing a particularly noteworthy victory – by succeeding in a skill check or characteristic roll during a combat Event.

Achievement Trophy – Cicek males also compete for Glory in a variety of non-combat ways. Whenever a Cicek male makes a successful skill check or characteristic roll in a non-combat Event, they take an Achievement Trophy. This Trophy is usually something significant to the event, but may not be that obviously significant to someone else. The Trophy can be a rock after successfully scaling a cliff; it could be a gear after successfully repairing a damaged weapon system or drive, etc. Cicek males often have many Achievement Trophies hung around their necks, attached to various body parts, etc. Larger Trophies are kept in their homes or offices and are on full display for other males to see.

Reticulan Empire

The Reticulan Empire does not distinguish between military and non-military medals for Reticulans, but does have a series of military awards for the Huscarls, Legionnaires, and other alien combat troops as a logical way of encouraging acts of heroism for the Empire.

Imperial Achievement Award Third Class – The Imperial Achievement Award Third Class is a medal awarded to individuals for outstanding service to the Empire. Any Reticulan who makes a skill check or characteristic roll in an Event with an Effect of 4 or more is eligible for this award. The award confers a +1 Social Standing or a +1 DM on their next Advancement roll (Player's Choice).

Imperial Achievement Award Second Class – The Imperial Achievement Award Second Class is awarded when a Reticulan makes a skill check or characteristic roll in an Event with an Effect of 6 or more. The award confers a +1 Social Standing and a +2 DM on their next Advancement roll.

Imperial Achievement Award First Class – The Imperial Achievement Award First Class is the highest award conferred on a Reticulan within the Empire. It is awarded when she makes a skill check or characteristic roll in an Event with an Effect of 8 or more. The award confers a +2 Social Standing and an automatic Promotion or Commission. Awardees are also granted the singular honor of being allowed to sit in the Imperial Presence.

As noted above, members of the Imperial House Huscarls or the Imperial Legion are awarded medals as a logical way to promote heroism and combat efficiency.

Legionnaire Service Medal – Inaccurately named, this medal is awarded for injuries sustained during combat. Any roll on the Injury table because of a combat Event or Mishap is 'rewarded' with this medal.

Combat Medal – Soldiers that are engaged in major combat are awarded the Combat Medal. This award is presented whenever a skill check or characteristic roll is made during a combat related Event.

Heroism Medal – Soldiers are awarded the Medal of Heroism when they make a skill check or characteristic roll during a combat Event with an Effect of 5 or more. This medal confers a +2 DM on their next Advancement or Commission roll.

Medal of Valor – Soldiers are awarded this high honor when they make a skill check or characteristic roll during a combat Event with an Effect of 7 or more. This medal confers a +1 Social Standing and an automatic Promotion or Commission.

Ssesslessian Harmony

The Ssesslessian Harmony does not award medals for service. However, they do reward exceptional achievement.

Whenever a Ssesslessian makes a skill check or characteristic roll in an Event with an Effect of 4 or more, they gain a +1 DM on their next Advancement roll.

A Ssesslessian making a skill check or characteristic roll in an Event with an Effect of 6 or more gains a +1 Social Standing and a +2 DM on their next Advancement roll.

Ssesslessians making a skill check or characteristic roll in an Event with an Effect of 8 or more gains an automatic Promotion or Commission and a +1 Social Standing.

Zhuzzh

Zhuzzh collect Trinkets, not medals. There are no formal medals awarded, but each individual Zhuzzh will have a wide variety of Trinkets that they collect for personal reasons. An individual Zhuzzh will have one significant Trinket per successful Skill or Characteristic roll in an Event. A roll with an Effect of 8 or better might, at the Referee's discretion, grant a minor Precursor artifact – considered to be sacred by the Zhuzzh.

Optional Rule: Events and Mishaps

To provide additional background information and more variety during character creation we strongly recommend that Referees and Players use the following *optional* tables.

Events

When using this optional rule, roll each term for an Event, after rolling for Survival but before rolling for Advancement or Commissioning.

2D6	Chiwak Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Hostile Environment. You are assigned to a world with a hostile or wild environment. Gain one of Animals (survival)-1, Recon-1, Vehicle-1, or Zero-G-1,
4	Urban Fighting. You are part of a unit assigned to an urbanized area. Roll Recon 8+ or Streetwise 8+. If you fail, roll in the Injury table. If you succeed, gain a level of the skill you rolled.
5	Special Assignment. You are assigned to a special project. Increase any one of your Service Skills by one.
6	Ground War. You are involved in a brutal ground war. Roll END 8+. If you fail, roll on the Injury table. If you succeed, gain Gun Combat or Leadership.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	In-Fighting. You develop a rivalry with another Chiwak in your unit and the two of you duel for honor. Roll Melee Combat 8+. If you fail, roll on the Injury table, and gain an Enemy. If you succeed, gain a level of Melee Combat and your rival as an Ally.
9	Child Care. Your pack chooses you to remain behind and protect the young. Gain one of the following: Admin, Animals, or Steward.
10	Sacrifice. You capture an enemy general and must decide whether to sacrifice them to the Nine Gods of the Hunt. If you choose to sacrifice them, gain +1 SOC. If you decide to let them live and sacrifice another, gain an Ally.
11	Trade Mission. You are involved in a trading mission with another species (not the Reticulans). Gain Broker or Linguistics.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

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2D6	Cicek Female Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Injury. You are injured. Roll on the Injury table.
4	Feeding the Tribe. You are responsible for providing food for the tribe. Gain one of Animals, Broker, Medicine, or Sciences.
5	War Planning. You are tasked with supporting your tribe during a major battle. Gain Admin or Tactics.
6	Feast. Your favorite male has decided to throw a feast to impress the other males in the tribe and convinces you to organize it for him. Throw Admin 8+ or Steward 8+. If you succeed, gain a level of the skill you rolled. If you fail, take a -1 DM on one Benefit roll.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Logistics Coordination. You and your tribe-mates must coordinate a major Cicek offensive. Throw Tactics 8+ or Admin 8+. If you succeed, gain a +1 DM on one Benefit roll. If you fail, take a -1 DM on one Benefit roll.
9	Tribal War. Your tribe goes to war with another tribe and you are responsible for negotiating the peace treaty. Throw Admin 8+, Advocate 8+, or Liaison 8+. If you succeed, gain a level of the skill you rolled. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
10	Stepping Up. You need to take a leadership role among the females of your tribe. Gain Leadership or Liaison.
11	Space Travel. Your tribe spends a lot of time in space. Gain one of Engineering, Navigation, Piloting, or Zero-G.
12	Fight. You are forced to fight for your tribe. Gain one of Gun Combat, Gunnery, or Melee Combat.

2D6	Cicek Male Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Athletic Glory. You try to prove yourself in non-combat events. Throw Athletics 8+, Animals 8+, or Zero-G 8+. If you succeed, gain a level of the skill you rolled and a +1 SOC. If you fail, roll on the Injury table, and take a -1 SOC.
4	Economic Glory. You attempt to gain Glory by defeating your rivals economically. Throw Broker 8+, Gambling 8+, or Bribery 8+. If you succeed, gain a +1 DM to one Benefit roll and a +1 SOC. If you fail, lose a Benefit roll and take a -1 SOC.
5	Outsmarted. Another male attempts to usurp your position by outsmarting you. Throw Intelligence 8+ or Tactics 8+. If you succeed, take a Trophy. If you fail, take a -1 SOC.
6	Going for Glory. You put yourself at risk to gain Glory. Throw Athletics 8+, Melee Combat 8+, or Gun Combat 8+. If you succeed, gain a +1 SOC. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Challenged. A lesser male challenges you. Throw Athletics 8+ or Melee Combat 8+. If you succeed, gain a +1 SOC. If you fail, roll on the Injury table, and take a -1 SOC.
9	Space Combat. You are in a space battle. Throw Gunnery 8+, Piloting 8+, Tactics 8+, or Zero-G 8+. If you succeed, gain a level of the skill you rolled and a +1 SOC. If you fail, roll on the Injury table, and take a -1 SOC. Either way, gain Battle Dress-1.
10	Follow the Leader. A male with superior Glory orders you into a dangerous situation. If you accept this mission, gain a +1 SOC and throw Athletics 8+ or Tactics 8+. If you succeed, gain an extra Benefit roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table. If you do not accept this mission, throw Melee Combat 8+ or Zero-G 8+. If you succeed, you replace the leader and gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement roll and a +1 SOC. If you fail, roll on the Injury table, and gain an Enemy.
11	Teamwork. You work with another male to gain Glory for both of you. Gain an Ally.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned, and gain a +1 SOC.

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2D6	CRC-8 Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Stranded. You are stranded behind enemy lines and must make your way to a safe house. Throw Animals 8+, Bribery 8+, or Leadership 8+. If you succeed, gain a level of the skill you rolled. If you fail, you spend your next term as a Prisoner of War.
4	Casino Royale. You are sent on a mission to a gambling establishment. Gain one of Bribery, Carousing, or Gambling.
5	Specialist Training. You receive advanced training. Increase any one skill you already have by one level.
6	Undercover Mission. You are sent on a mission behind enemy lines. You may roll on the Service Skill table of any Civilian career listed above. Throw Bribery 8+ or Athletics 8+. If you succeed, gain a +1 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Driver Training. You are given special training in vehicles. Gain one of Piloting, Vehicles, or Zero-G.
9	Informant. You are sent to turn an enemy agent to your side. Throw Liaison 8+ or Intelligence 8+. If you succeed, gain an Ally. If you fail, gain an Enemy.
10	Assassination. You are sent to assassinate an important target. Throw Gun Combat 8+ or Tactics 8+. If you succeed, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
11	Above and Beyond. You go beyond the call of duty. Gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

2D6	CRC-16 Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Internal Investigation. You are part of an internal investigation tasked with finding an enemy double-agent. Throw Recon 8+ or Comms 8+. If you succeed, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll and an Enemy. If you fail, take a -1 DM on one Benefit roll and still gain an Enemy.
4	Deep Cover. You go undercover to investigate a terrorist cell. Throw Recon 8+ or Bribery 8+. If you succeed, roll on the Specialist Skill table for the Rogue or Citizen careers. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
5	Marksmanship. You receive advanced weapons training. Gain Melee Combat, Gun Combat, or Gunnery.
6	Under Cover. You are sent under cover into a group of Reticulan sympathizers. Throw Bribery 8+. If you succeed, gain a +1 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll and an Enemy. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Terrorist Attack. You attempt to thwart a terrorist attack. Throw Comms 8+, Recon 8+, or Streetwise 8+. If you succeed, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
9	Advanced Training. You are given advanced training. Gain any skill you do not already have at Level-1.
10	Dangerous Investigation. An investigation takes a dangerous turn. Throw Recon 8+ or Streetwise 8+. If you succeed, gain Bribery, Jack-of-all-Trades, or Tactics. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
11	Befriended. A superior agent befriends you. Gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll and an Ally.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

These Stars Are Ours!

2D6	CRC-32 Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Strange Science. You are offered a chance to participate in an experiment that might increase your psionic powers. If you accept, throw PSI 8+. If you succeed, you may re-roll for a psionic talent that you don't have without negative DMs. If you fail, take a -1 PSI.
4	Surveillance. You perform routine intelligence work. Throw INT 8+. If you succeed gain one of Comms, Recon, or Sensors.
5	Unethical Psion. You have a chance to use your powers unethically to better your standing. If you accept throw PSI 8+. If you succeed, gain an extra Benefit roll or a +1 SOC. If you fail, take a -1 SOC.
6	Advanced Training. You receive advanced training in your psionic talents. Increase any one of your psionic Talents by one level.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Psionic Training. You achieve a new level of psionic strength. Gain +1 PSI.
9	Mind and Body. You receive training in mundane skills. Gain one of Athletics, Animals, Melee Combat, Stealth, or Streetwise.
10	Connections. You make a connection outside of your normal circles. Gain a non-psionic Ally.
11	Secret. You learn something that you shouldn't know. Throw INT 8+. If you succeed, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, gain an Enemy. The nature of this secret is up to the Referee.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

2D6	Elite Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Celebrity Status. You are part of your homeworld's celebrity circles. Gain one of Carousing-1, Liaison-1, or Steward-1.
4	Political Animal. You become deeply involved in the politics of your world, becoming a player in your government. Gain one of Admin, Advocate, Liaison but also gain an Enemy.
5	Inheritance. You inherit a gift from a rich relative. Gain an extra Benefit roll.
6	Conspiracy. You are invited to join a conspiracy against the current government. If you refuse their offer, gain an Enemy. If you accept the offer, throw Bribery 8+ or Liaison 8+. If you succeed, gain one of Bribery, Liaison, or Tactics. If you fail, throw Advocate 10+ to avoid spending a term in Prison.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Political In-Fighting. You have the opportunity to criticize, or even bring down, a questionable political leader. If you refuse and support the leader, gain an Ally. If you attempt to discredit them, roll Liaison 8+ or Social Standing 8+. If you succeed, increase any Level-0 skill to Level-1. If you fail, take a -1 SOC.
9	Acclaimed Rule. Your rulership, or directorship, is acclaimed by all as being fair and wise. Gain either a jealous rival or an unhappy subject as an Enemy but also gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission check.
10	Interstellar Tour. You go on a tour, visiting several different worlds. Gain Animals, Linguistics, or Zero-G.
11	Alliance. You make an alliance with a powerful and charismatic member of the government. Gain an Ally and either a level of Leadership or a +4 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

These Stars Are Ours!

2D6	Imperial House Huscarl or Imperial Legion Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Trapped Behind Enemy Lines. You are caught behind enemy lines and must survive on your own. Gain one of Animals, Athletics, Stealth, or Zero-G; but you must also roll on twice on the Injury table and take the higher result.
4	Security Detail. You are assigned to the security staff on a space station. Gain Athletics or Zero-G.
5	Shore Duty. You spend time relaxing between missions. Gain Carousing-1 or Gambling-1.
6	Assault. You are ordered to assault an enemy fortress. Throw Melee Combat 8+ or Gun Combat 8+. If you succeed, gain Tactics or Leadership. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Front Lines. You are on the front lines of a planetary assault and occupation. Gain one of Recon-1, Comms-1, Gun Combat-1, or Tactics-1.
9	Disastrous Mission. A mission goes terribly wrong due to your commander's error or incompetence. Accuse your CO and gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement roll and an Enemy. If you say nothing and protect them, gain an Ally.
10	Advanced Training. You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Throw EDU 8+ to gain any one skill of your choice at Level-1.
11	Reticulan Interest. A senior Reticulan takes an interest in you. You may take a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commissioning roll due to her influence.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

2D6	Merchant Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Reticulan Smuggler. You are offered the opportunity to smuggle items from the Reticulans to their allies on the planet. If you accept, throw Bribery 8+ or Streetwise 8+. If you succeed, gain a level of the skill you rolled and an extra Benefit roll. If you fail, gain an Enemy. If you refuse to aid the Reticulans, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll.
4	Supply and Demand. You work hard at your trade. Gain one of Animals, Broker, Comms, Electronics, or Science.
5	Risky Business. You have a chance to risk your fortune on the possibility of a lucrative deal. You may risk as many Benefit rolls as you have. Throw Broker 8+ or Gambling 8+. If you succeed, you gain half as many additional Benefits as your risked. If you fail, you lose the Benefits that you risked. Either way, gain a level of the skill that you rolled.
6	Alien Contact. You make contact with aliens. Gain an Alien Ally and Linguistics-1 in their language.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Legal Trouble. You are caught up in a legal battle. Throw Advocate 8+. If you succeed, gain one of Advocate, Admin, or Recon. If you fail, you must spend next term in Prison.
9	Advanced Training. You are given advanced training. Throw EDU 8+. If you succeed, gain a level of Broker, Engineering, Navigation, Piloting, or Zero-G.
10	Pirate Raid. Pirates or privateers attack your ship. Throw Gun Combat 8+, Gunnery 8+ or Dexterity 10+. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
11	Good Deal. You make a good deal on some merchandise. Gain a +1 DM on a Benefit roll.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

These Stars Are Ours!

2D6	PRI Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Psionic Experiment. You are offered the chance to participate in a dangerous psionic experiment. If you agree, throw PSI 8+. If you succeed, increase your psionic strength by 1D6. If you fail, take a -1 PSI; however, if you roll a natural 2 on the roll, you lose all your psionic powers and your PSI characteristic is permanently reduced to zero.
4	Unethical. You have a chance to use your powers unethically to better your standing. If you accept, throw PSI 8+. If you succeed, gain an extra Benefit roll or a +1 SOC. If you fail, lose one SOC. If you do not accept, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll.
5	Body over Mind. You work to improve yourself. Gain one of Athletics, Animals, or Zero-G.
6	Covert Operation. A CRC-32 agent requests your help. Roll on the CRC-32 Specialist Skill table and a CRC-32 Event.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Psionic Training. You increase your psionic ability. Gain +1 PSI.
9	Negotiations. You are involved in secret, or high level negotiations. Throw PSI 8+. If you succeed, gain Linguistics-1 or an Ally. If you fail, take a -2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll.
10	Advanced Training. You are given advanced training. Throw EDU 8+. If you succeed, increase any skill you have by one level (not including a Talent).
11	Secret. You learn something that you shouldn't know. Throw INT 8+. If you succeed, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, gain an Enemy. The nature of this secret is up to the Referee.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

2D6	Reticulan Noble Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Aberrant Behavior. You begin experiencing strong emotions or other signs of aberrant behavior. Turn yourself in and take a -1 SOC. Keep it a secret and take a -2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll.
4	Space Service. You spend time in space. Gain one of Comms, Engineering, Navigation, Piloting, Zero-G.
5	Business is Business. You work hard to improve your House. Gain one of Broker, Engineering, Liaison, Medicine or Science.
6	Scientific Investigation. You are part of an important scientific investigation. Throw Sciences 8+ or EDU 8+. If you succeed, gain one of Comms, Computer, Electronics, Engineering, or Sciences.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Technate or Empire? A faction representing the other side of the conflict approaches you and you may change sides between the Technate and the Empire. If you choose to remain loyal, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you decide to change sides, gain a +1 SOC.
9	The Game of Houses. You are part of the great game between the Houses. Throw Liaison 8+ or SOC 8+. If you succeed, gain a +1 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, take a -1 SOC. Either way, gain Liaison.
10	Combat. You lead a group of Auxiliaries or warbots into battle. Gain Computer or Tactics.
11	Eldest. You encounter the Eldest, the oldest living member of your line. Gain a +4 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll due to her assistance. Gain an Ally.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

These Stars Are Ours!

2D6	Reticulan Prole Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Dangerous Liaison. Ungrateful aliens attack you. Roll on the Injury table.
4	Driving School. You receive advanced driver training. Gain Vehicle or Piloting (small craft).
5	Noble's Servant. You are assigned to be a servant to one of the senior nobles of your House, or a senior member of government. Gain Carousing, Liaison, or Steward.
6	Field Research. You are part of a field research team that abducts alien species (intelligent or animal) and experiment on them. Gain Animals, Medicine, or Recon.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Technate or Empire? A faction representing the other side of the conflict approaches you and you may change sides between the Technate and the Empire. If you choose to remain loyal, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you decide to change sides, gain a +1 SOC.
9	Unusual Talent. You develop an unusual skill. Gain Jack-of-All-Trades, Melee Combat, Gun Combat.
10	Worker. You supervise a group of alien workers in mundane tasks. Gain Animals, Broker, or Leadership.
11	Noble Contact. You are befriended by a Noble or other high SOC Reticulan. Gain a +2 DM due to her assistance. Gain an Ally.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

2D6	Scout Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Ambushed. An enemy vessel ambushes your ship. If you choose to run, throw Piloting 8+ to escape. If you fail, roll on the Injury table. If you choose to fight, throw Gunnery 8+. If you succeed, gain a +1 DM on one Benefit roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
4	Survey Duty. You survey an alien world. Gain one of Animals, Recon, or Sciences.
5	Exemplary Service. You perform a great, but secret, service to the scouts or your government. Gain a +1 DM on one Benefit roll.
6	Interstellar Travel. You spend several years jumping from world to world in your space ship. Gain one of Engineering, Navigation, Piloting, or Zero-G.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Alien Contact. While dealing with an alien race, you have an opportunity to gather extra intelligence about them. Throw Comms 8+ or Recon 8+. If you succeed, gain an Ally and a +1 DM on one Benefit roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table. Either way, gain Linguistics.
9	Rescue Mission. Your ship is one of the first vessels on the scene of a disaster. Throw Engineering 8+ or Medicine 8+. If you succeed, gain a level of the skill you rolled and an Ally. If you fail, gain an Enemy.
10	Seconded. You are assigned liaison duty with the Navy. Roll a skill on the Navy Specialist Skill table and gain an Ally.
11	Courier Duty. You serve as a courier for important messages for your government. Gain either Liaison, Steward, or a high-ranking Ally in the government.
12	Exploration. You spend time on the fringes of known space. You discover a new world or lost colony of great worth. Gain an extra Benefit roll and a +1 SOC.

These Stars Are Ours!

2D6	Sesslessian Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Ten Thousand Daggers. You are offered a chance to join the Ten Thousand Daggers, the elite Ssesslessian cult dedicated to shedding Reticulan blood. If you accept, throw DEX 8+ or Melee Combat 8+. If you succeed, gain a +1 SOC and a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
4	Life in Space. You spend a lot of time in space. Gain one of Navigation, Piloting, or Zero-G.
5	Assassination. You are ordered to assassinate a beloved figure amongst your enemies. If you choose to carry out your mission, gain Gun Combat or Melee Combat and an Enemy. If you choose not to perform your mission, gain an Ally.
6	Colonist. You are given the chance to give up the bloody war and become a colonist on Mehen, working to rebuild Ssesslessian culture and society. You may take the Colonist career next term, without having to roll for Qualification.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Infiltration Unit. You join a multi-species infiltration division. Gain Linguistics and throw Gun Combat 8+ or Stealth 8+. If you succeed, gain one of Animals, Athletics, Gun Combat, Melee Combat, or Stealth. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
9	Justicar. You are assigned to assist a Justicar in maintaining the faith. Gain Advocate, Liaison, or Steward.
10	Advanced Training. You are given advanced training. Gain one of Demolitions, Stealth, Streetwise, or Zero-G.
11	Above and Beyond. You perform your duties in an exemplary manner. Gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

2D6	Terran Army Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Heavy Infantry. You are assigned to a heavy infantry unit. Gain Battle Dress. Throw DEX 8+ or Gun Combat 8+. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
4	Hostile World. You are assigned to a world with a hostile or wild environment. Gain one of Animals, Mechanics, or Zero-G.
5	Street Fighting. You fight a battle in an urbanized area. Gain one of Recon, Stealth, or Streetwise.
6	Ground War. You are involved in a ground war. Throw DEX 8+ or END 8+. If you succeed, gain Gun Combat, Leadership, or Tactics. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Advanced Training. You receive advanced training in a specialist field. Throw EDU 8+. If you succeed, increase any skill you already have by one level.
9	Garrison. You are assigned to garrison duty. Gain one of Admin-1, Recon-1, or Streetwise-1.
10	Multi-Species Unit. You are assigned to a multi-species unit. Gain Linguistics and an Ally.
11	Mentor. Your commanding officer takes an interest in your career. Gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll due to their influence.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

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2D6	Terran Guard Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Trapped. You are trapped behind enemy lines and must survive on your own. Gain one of Animals, Stealth, or Streetwise.
4	Combat Training. You receive advanced combat training. Throw EDU 8+. If you succeed, gain one of Battle Dress, Demolitions, Gun Combat, or Tactics.
5	Shore Leave. You have some down time. Gain one of Athletics, Bribery, Carousing, Gambling, or Sciences.
6	Suicide Mission. You are tasked with assaulting an enemy position when you are outgunned. Throw Gun Combat 10+ or Stealth 10+. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Ground Assault. You are part of a massive assault against a fortified world. Throw Zero-G 8+ or Gun Combat 8+. If you succeed, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
9	Advanced Training. You are given advanced training. Add a level to any skill you already possess.
10	Black Ops. You are assigned to a Black Ops mission. Throw Gun Combat 8+ or Stealth 8+. If you succeed, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
11	Politics. You are involved in the politics of the Guard. Gain one of Advocate, Liaison, or Linguistics. Additionally, gain one Ally and one Enemy.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

2D6	Terran Marine Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Special Forces. You receive special forces training. Throw END 8+. If you succeed, gain Battle Dress, Comms, Gunnery, or Recon. If you fail, take a -1 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll.
4	Shore Leave. You enjoy your down-time between missions. Gain one of Athletics, Carousing, Gambling, or Steward.
5	Advanced Training. You receive advanced training. Throw EDU 8+. If you succeed, increase any skill you already have by one.
6	Aerospace Assault. You are involved in an aerospace assault of an enemy position. Throw Melee Combat 8+ or Gun Combat 8+. If you succeed, gain Battle Dress, Tactics, or Leadership. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Planetary Occupation. You are involved in ensuring peace on an occupied planet. Gain one of Gun Combat, Recon, or Streetwise.
9	Driver Training. You are given advanced driver training. Gain one of Mechanic, Piloting, or Vehicle.
10	Political Unrest. You are assigned to quell political unrest on a UTR world or within the Marines between former Guard and Naval Infantry units. Throw Liaison 8+ or INT 8+. If you succeed, gain Advocate, Broker, Leadership, or Liaison and an Enemy. If you fail, gain Streetwise and an Ally.
11	Political Ally. Your commanding officer takes an interest in you. Gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll due to their influence. Gain an Ally.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

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2D6	Terran Naval Infantry Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Disastrous Mission. A mission goes very wrong. Throw Advocate 8+ or EDU 8+. If you succeed, gain a +1 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, you are demoted one rank (not below rank 0) and lose your Benefit roll for this term.
4	Shore Duty. You are assigned to a planet-side facility. Gain one of Admin, Carousing, Gambling, or Melee Combat.
5	Space Combat Training. You receive space combat training. Throw EDU 8+, if you succeed, gain one of Engineering, Navigation, Piloting, or Zero-G.
6	Boarding Action. You are part of a space battle and are involved in boarding actions. Throw Battle Dress 8+ or Gun Combat 8+. If you succeed, gain a level of the skill you rolled and gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Planetary Assault. You are on the front lines of a planetary assault. Throw Gun Combat 8+ or Animals 8+. If you succeed, gain one of Animals, Comms, Gun Combat, or Recon. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
9	Hostile Environment Training. You receive advanced training in hostile environments. Gain one of Animals, Sensors, Vehicle or Zero-G.
10	Black Ops. You are assigned to a Black Ops mission. Throw Stealth 8+ or Tactics 8+. If you succeed, gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
11	Mentor. Your commanding officer takes an interest in your career. Take a +4 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll due to their influence. Gain an Ally
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

2D6	Terran Navy Event
2	Mishap. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Gambling Ring. You join a gambling ring aboard your ship during your down time. If you wish, you may risk a Benefit roll. Throw Gambling 8+. If you succeed, gain an additional Benefit roll. If you fail, lose that Benefit roll.
4	Ship Destroyed. Your ship suffers severe damage during a battle. You may attempt to save some of your shipmates. If you choose to try to save them, throw DEX 8+, Electronics 8+ or Mechanics 8+. If you succeed, gain an Ally and either Mechanics or Electronics. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
5	Advanced Training. You receive advanced training in a specialist field. Throw EDU 8+ to gain one level of any skill you already have.
6	Naval Battle. Your ship participates in a notable naval battle. Gain one of Comms, Gunnery, Engineer or Piloting. Also, gain a +1 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Diplomatic Mission. Your ship participates in a diplomatic mission. Gain one of an Ally, Carousing, Liaison, or Steward.
9	Mutiny. You foil an attempted mutiny by forces loyal to the Reticulans. Gain an Enemy, but also a +2 DM on your next Advancement or Commission roll.
10	Special Assignment. You are given a special assignment. Throw INT 8+ to gain a +1 DM on one Benefit roll.
11	Mentor. Your commanding officer takes an interest in your career. Gain either Tactics or a +4 DM on our next Advancement or Commission roll due to their influence.
12	Advancement. You are automatically Promoted or Commissioned.

These Stars Are Ours!

2D6	Terran Police Event
2	Disaster. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Dangerous Mission. You are assigned to a dangerous mission. Roll Recon 8+ or Streetwise 8+. If you succeed, increase the skill you rolled by one. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
4	Successful Mission. You complete a successful mission and are rewarded. Gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement roll.
5	Specialist Training. You are given advanced training. Increase any one skill by one level.
6	Trusted Informant. You gain a close informant. Gain an Ally.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Undercover. You are sent undercover. Throw Bribery 8+ or Recon 8+. If you succeed, roll on the Specialist Skill table of the Rogue career. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
9	Driver Training. You are given advanced training in vehicle operation. Gain a level of Vehicle.
10	Above and Beyond. You go beyond the call of duty. Gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement roll.
11	Mentor. A senior officer befriends you. Gain Recon or Advocate and an Ally.
12	Conspiracy. You uncover a major conspiracy and are automatically Promoted or Commissioned (Player's Choice). The nature of this conspiracy is at the Referee's discretion.

2D6	Zhuzzh Event
2	Disaster. Roll on the Mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Unusual Event. You encounter something unusual. Go to the Civilian Event table and roll for an Unusual Event (the same as rolling a 12 on the Civilian Event table).
4	Unusual Skill. You pick up a useful skill. Gain one of Animals, Jack-of-All-Trades, Streetwise, or Zero-G.
5	Change Nests. You decide to change nests. Increase any one of your Background skills to level-1.
6	Scavenger. You manage to scavenge something of value. Gain a +1 DM on one Benefit roll and gain a Trinket.
7	War Event. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Attacked by an Enemy. An Enemy attacks you. Gain an Enemy if you do not already have one. Also, throw Melee Combat 8+ or Gun Combat 8+ to avoid a roll on the Injury table.
9	Techno-priest. You train under a Technopriest. Throw EDU 8+. If you succeed, gain one of Electronics, Gravitics, or Mechanics.
10	Risk and Reward. You have the chance to participate in a risky, but rewarding adventure. If you accept, throw INT 8+ or EDU 8+. If you fail, roll on the Injury table. If you succeed, roll 1D6 and see below: 1-2: You are taken prisoner. You must spend the next term in Prison, but gain an Ally. 3-4: You survive, but gain nothing. 5-6: You succeed, you gain a +1 DM on two different Benefit rolls and an Ally.
11	Life on the Edge. Life on the edge hones your abilities. Increase any skill you already have by one level.
12	Great Teacher Artifact. You find a genuine Great Teacher (Precursor) artifact. Gain a +1 SOC and a +1 DM on one Benefit roll.

Mishaps

Mishaps occur when called for by the Event tables. Optionally, a particularly merciful Referee may decide that characters who have failed their Survival throw can roll on this table in lieu of dying. In this case, they are automatically ejected from their career after two years, gain no Benefit roll for that term, and do not gain any career skills for that term.

2D6	Mishap
2	Severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result, but you may keep your Benefit roll for this term.
3	Harassed. A criminal gang harasses you and ruins your life. Gain an Enemy.
4	Discharged. You are discharged from the service after a long legal battle. Roll Advocate 10+. If you succeed, you must pay legal debt of Cr10000, but are honorably discharged. If you fail, you must spend the next 4 years in prison and receive a dishonorable discharge. Either way, you lose all benefits from this career.
5	Dishonorably discharged. Lose all benefits from this career.
6	Secret. You learn something you shouldn't and people are out to get you. Gain an Enemy.
7	Discharged. You are discharged from this career.
8	Framed. Your immediate supervisor framed you for something they did. Gain an Enemy.
9	Betrayed by a friend. If you have an Ally, change them to an Enemy. If you do not have an Ally, an acquaintance betrays you and you still gain an Enemy.
10	Revolution. Your home is thrown into chaos by a revolution, attack, or other unusual event. Throw Streetwise 10+. If you succeed, you may keep your Benefit roll for this term.
11	Mental Breakdown. You suffer from a mental disease, such as a neurosis or post-traumatic stress disorder. While modern medicine can ease the symptoms of such illnesses, you still suffer from minor side effects. Whenever in a stressful situation (such as combat), throw INT 6+ to avoid a mental breakdown. Details are left to the Referee.
12	Injured. You are medically discharged from the service. Roll on the Injury table, but you may keep your Benefit roll for this term.

War Event Table

The Event tables above sometimes refer to the War Event table. On such an Event, roll 2D6 and consult the following table. This represents those types of events which can occur to an individual of any species during the Terran Liberation War, as well as various personal events.

2D6	War Event
2	Biological Weapon. A biological or chemical weapon deployed by one of the belligerents in the war affects you. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower roll.
3	Sickness or Injury. You are sick or injured – roll on the Injury table. Unlike injuries caused by failed Survival rolls, this does not represent combat wounds but rather injury or sickness outside of combat, such as from an accident.
4	Liaison. You serve as a liaison or attaché with an alien unit, or if you are a civilian, you engage in business or other collaboration with aliens. Gain Liaison-1 and Linguistics-1 in that species' language.
5	Collaborator. You or a neighbor is accused of collaborating with the enemy. Throw Advocate 8+. If you succeed, gain a +1 DM on your next Advancement roll. If you fail, you spend the term in Prison (see below) before you are cleared of charges.
6	Battle. You are involved in one of the major battles of the war. If you are in a military career, gain an additional roll on your Service Skill table. If you are a civilian, you may join the Army or Navy next term with a +2 DM to your Qualification roll.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Civilian Event Table.
8	Reassigned. You are moved between units or locations and find new opportunities. You must leave your career at the end of this term, but you gain a +4 DM on your next Qualification roll.
9	Conscription. If you are not currently in a military career, you are conscripted. Roll on the Draft table and automatically join the rolled service next term. If you are in a military service, you may make a roll on your career's Service Skill table.
10	Captured. You become a prisoner of war. You spend the rest of this term as a prisoner of the enemy and are then released in a prisoner exchange or a daring raid by friendly forces, or an even more daring escape. During your incarceration, you cannot roll for Advancement or Commissioning, but do earn your full Mustering Out Benefit as compensation. Roll END 8+ or INT 8+ to avoid a roll on the Injury table. If you are injured, you are Honorably Discharged once you are liberated. If you avoid injury, you may return to your original career without having to roll for Qualification and may roll on the POW Skill table below. You also learn your captor's language.
11	Travel. You spend much of your time traveling between worlds. Gain Steward-1 or Linguistics-1.
12	Unusual Event. Something weird happens, roll 1D6. 1. Psionics – You are discovered to possess Psionics. If you are Cicek, you become a Shaman. If you are Ssesslessian, nothing happens – Ssesslessians cannot be psionic. If you are Terran, you are recruited into CRC-32 or the PRI – see Terran Psionics for details. If you are Reticulan, you become a Priestess. You immediately test your Psionic Strength. 2. Abduction – An enemy alien species – unless you are a Reticulan yourself, these would be the Reticulans – abducts you. However, they do not keep you as a POW, but rather release you after a short time of experimentation. You might suffer from some “missing time”. Roll END 8+ to avoid a roll on the Injury table, but you now know the language of the abducting species (Gain Linguistics-1 in that language). 3. Alien Artefact – You have a strange or unusual device or other item belonging to an alien culture that is not normally available to your species. The artifact is worth 1D6xCr5000. 4. Amnesia – Something happened to you, but you don't know what it was. Your memories of the last few months are just – gone. 5. Contact with High Command or Government – You come into contact with a high-ranking officer in your military or with the highest echelons of your government. Gain an Ally there. 6. Precursor Artifact – You come into possession of a Precursor Artifact worth 1D6xCr50000.

Civilian Events

If a character is rolled using the basic, civilian careers detailed in the Cepheus Engine rulebook, but the player and Referee would also like to use the Events tables shown in this book, we provide a Civilian Event table that can be rolled for any of the careers from the *CE* Rulebook.

2D6	Civilian Event
2	Injured. You suffer an injury or illness. Roll on the Injury table.
3	Refugee. The War destroys your home. Lose one Benefit roll.
4	Good Fortune. Something good happens to you. Gain a +1 on one Cash Benefit roll.
5	Ending of Relationship. A romantic or fraternal relationship you are involved in ends – badly. Change an Ally into an Enemy. If you do not have an Ally, you still gain an Enemy.
6	Improved Relationship. A romantic or fraternal relationship deepens, possibly leading to marriage or a profound friendship. Change an Enemy into an Ally. If you don't have an Enemy, gain an Ally.
7	War Event. You are caught up in events of the war. Roll on the War Event table.
8	Travel. You spend a lot of time travelling between worlds. Gain either Steward-1 or Linguistics-1.
9	Study. You work to improve yourself. Increase any skill you have by one level.
10	Crime. You commit or are accused of a crime. Lose one Benefit roll. Throw Advocate 8+. If you fail, you must spend the next 4 years in Prison (see below).
11	Career Change. Dissatisfied with your current life, you decide to change careers. You must change careers at the end of this term, but you gain a +2 DM on your next Qualification roll.
12	Unusual Event. Something strange or unusual happens to you. Roll 1D6: 1. Psionics – You are discovered to possess Psionics. If you are Cicek, you become a Shaman. If you are Ssesslessian, nothing happens – Ssesslessians cannot be psionic. If you are Terran, you are recruited into CRC-32 or the PRI – see Terran Psionics for details. If you are Reticulan, you become a Priestess. You immediately test your Psionic Strength. 2. Abduction – An enemy alien species – unless you are a Reticulan yourself, these would be the Reticulans – abducts you. However, they do not keep you as a POW, but rather release you after a short time of experimentation. You might suffer from some “missing time”. Roll END 8+ to avoid a roll on the Injury table, but you now know the language of the abducting species (Gain Linguistics-1 in that language). 3. Alien Artefact – You have a strange or unusual device or other item belonging to an alien culture that is not normally available to your species. The artifact is worth 1D6xCr5000. 4. Amnesia – Something happened to you, but you don't know what it was. Your memories of the last few months are just – gone. 5. Contact with High Command or Government – You come into contact with a high-ranking officer in your military or with the highest echelons of your government. Gain an Ally there. 6. Precursor Artifact – You come into possession of a Precursor Artifact worth 1D6xCr50000.

Prison

When a character rolls an Event or Mishap that sends them to prison as a criminal, or if they are captured and are a prisoner of war (POW), they must spend one term in captivity. Rather than roll a skill on their career tables, they must roll on the Prison skill table below. Prisoners do not roll for advancement or commission and do not gain a Benefit for this term; POWs may keep their Benefit roll. During your time as a prisoner, you may roll once on the following table per term of captivity.

1D6	Prison Skill
1	+1 END
2	Gambling
3	Streetwise
4	Survival
5	Bribery
6	Recon

Cybernetics

Advanced technology can replace damaged organs and limbs, improve the body, and grant new capabilities. The most common form of such augmentations is cybernetics – the implantation of bio-mechanical systems into the organic body. Such technology first becomes available at TL9 and reaches its full maturity at mid-late TL13 – the level of technology available only to the Reticulans. Theoretically speaking, by TL14, artificial organic systems will gradually replace the bio-mechanical implants, culminating in non-invasive retro-viral and nano-technological augmentation at TL16.

Critical Injury and Replacements

Per the Cepheus Engine rules, characters die when all three of their physical characteristics are reduced to zero. However, under the following optional rules, the science of medicine can sometimes revive a mortally wounded character. This has been possible since the dawn of modern medicine, but becomes easier to perform at higher tech levels. The key in all cases is to bring the mortally wounded character to a hospital or other full-scale medical center within the “Golden Hour” of trauma medicine – that is, within one hour from injury. Even with advanced first aid, critically injured characters whose three physical characteristics were reduced to zero will not survive without trauma care within an hour of injury. Ordinary medbays common on most starships will not suffice – a dedicated hospital, whether shipboard or planetbound, is the only facility capable of such medical operations or in a high-grade automatic medical unit (Autodoc). If no hospital can be reached within one hour, the only way to preserve the wounded is to place them into a “low berth” or cryoberth. Note that the survival Medic check upon thawing the frozen character also applies here. Also, note that characters killed by vehicle-scale or starship-scale weapons cannot be resuscitated.

Once on the operating table, the surgeon treating the critically injured character must make a Medic check (1D hours, EDU) with difficulty based on tech level, as given in the following table.

Trauma Surgery Difficulty

Tech Level	Difficulty
0-2	Almost Impossible (-8)
3-4	Formidable (-6)
5-6	Very Difficult (-4)
7-8	Difficult (-2)
9-11	Average (+0)
12-14	Routine (+2)
15+	Easy (+4)

The end result depends on the Effect of this Medic check, as shown on Trauma Surgery Result table on the next page.

Trauma Surgery Results

Effect	Result
-6	The Character is dead and badly mangled. They cannot be brought back to life using cyborg conversion, but they can still be brought to life by bio regeneration but suffering a -4 DM to the Medic roll.
-2 to -5	The Character is dead but the body remains intact. They can be brought to life using cyborg conversion or bio regeneration with no adverse DMs.
-1	The Character is resuscitated and gains 1 point of Endurance. However, their body has suffered massive damage and may require drastic surgical actions. Roll 1D6: 1-2, Character loses a leg; 3-4, Character loses an arm; 5-6, Character loses both eyes and is blinded. Further surgery and healing follow the normal healing rules.
0	The Character is resuscitated and gains 1 point of Endurance. However, they are still critically injured and will suffer severe lasting effects from the injury. Roll 1D6: 1-2, Character loses a hand; 3-4, Character loses one eye; 5-6, Character suffers brain damage. Further surgery and healing follow the <i>SRD</i> rules.
1 to 5	The Character is resuscitated and gains 1 point of Endurance but suffers minor lasting damage. Roll 1D6: 1-2, Character is badly scarred; 3-4, Character loses 1D3 fingers; 5-6, Character loses most teeth. Further surgery and healing follow the normal healing rules.
6 or more	The Character is resuscitated with no special ill effects and gains 1 point of Endurance. Further surgery and healing follow the normal healing rules.
DMs: -2 if an area-affecting weapon critically wounds the character; +1 if a character with at least Medic-1 administered first aid to the character within 10 minutes of injury; -1 if a character with Medic-0 or less administered first aid within 10 minutes of injury; -2 with no first aid within 10 minutes of injury; character will die if no first aid given within 30 minutes of injury.	

Lasting Injuries

Here is a list the effects of the various inflictions caused by the above table. At TL9+, the common method for compensating for organ or limb loss is cybernetic replacement. Most societies do not treat those citizens that have replacement parts any differently than normal citizens, in fact, in the UTR and many other post-war societies, people with replacement body parts receive a +1 DM on any encounter reaction rolls due to the high esteem that veterans are held. The same cannot be said for those with obvious augments.

Blinded: The character loses both eyes to injury and is blind. The character suffers DM -4 to all checks and other rolls requiring sight and is otherwise impaired at the Referee's discretion. At TL9+, a pair of cybernetic eyes costing Cr15000 restores normal vision.

Brain Damage: The character's brain suffers a lasting injury, either to cognitive or memory functions. Roll 1D6: 1-3, halve the character's Intelligence score, rounding down, to a minimum of 1; 1-3, halve the character's Education score, rounding down, to a minimum of 1. At TL12+, extensive cybernetic repair work can restore the character to normal functioning (and characteristics) at a cost of Cr5000 per characteristic point restored.

Lost Arm: One of the character's arms must be amputated to save their life. The character obviously cannot use this arm for any purpose. At TL7+, a modern mechanical prosthetic costing Cr5000 restores almost normal functionality, though any actions performed using the stricken hand suffer from DM -2 due to the arm's ungainly mechanical nature. At TL11+, a cybernetic arm costing Cr10000 restores perfect functionality.

Lost Fingers: The character loses several fingers to injury. He or she suffers from DM -2 to all checks related to that specific hand, and DM -1 to all checks involving both hands. At TL11+, cybernetic fingers cost Cr2000 each and – once surgery replaces all fingers – restore normal functionality.

Lost Hand: One of the character's hands must be amputated as part of medical care, though surgery saves most of the arm. The character loses all uses of the hand. At TL8, an advanced prosthetic costing Cr2000 can restore almost perfect functionality, albeit at DM -2 to all actions performed with the mechanical hand. At TL11+, a cybernetic hand costing Cr5000 restores full functionality.

Lost Leg: One of the character's legs must be amputated to save his or her life. The character cannot move unaided other than by crawling. Using a crutch or a wheelchair, the character may move 1 meter per minor

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action and cannot use at least one hand while doing so. At TL9+, using a high-end cybernetic leg, costing Cr20000, the character may move at the full movement rate of 6 meters per minor action.

Lost One Eye: The character is blinded in one eye but retains the other, losing depth vision and drastically reducing his or her field of view. The character retains vision but suffers DM -2 to all actions requiring depth of vision, such as attacking in combat, as well as to any check related to having a normal field of vision, such as noticing someone sneaking up to the character. At TL12+, a cybernetic or vat-grown eye costing Cr7500 restores normal vision. Firing a weapon with a TL7 or better electronic scope negates any penalty incurred by losing one eye.

Lost Teeth: Most of the characters' teeth are knocked out, making eating difficult causing DM -4 to all checks involving speech. TL7+ dentistry can restore all teeth at a total cost of Cr2000.

Scarring: The character suffers extensive and lasting scars or burn marks from their injury. The character is easily recognizable and suffers a -2 DM to all social checks, except for intimidation in which they enjoy a DM +2.

Augments

The following augments, cybernetic or bio-mechanical, are available in the TSAO setting. Beings equipped with Augments are often called Cyborgs; some cultures treat Cyborgs as if they had the Bad First Impression trait, if the augment is noticed. All characters with Augments have the Engineered Trait at the highest TL of the Augment installed.

Subdermal Armor – A layer of synthetic mesh is placed under the skin, greatly increasing damage resistance. Once installed, subdermal armor is treated as the Natural Armor trait.

- TL11: 6 points of protection. Cost: Cr10000
- TL12: 9 points of protection. Cost: Cr20000
- TL13: 12 points of protection. Cost: Cr30000

Head Bomb – A tiny remote-controlled explosive device is positioned in the brain so that its detonation will kill the subject without risking any collateral damage. At TL9 (cost Cr2500), the result is obvious – the subject's head explodes, at least partially. At TL11+ (cost Cr10000), the bomb is microscopic and the explosion will be indistinguishable from a stroke to any medical examination lower than the bomb's TL.

Cybernetic Explosive Device (CED) – The ultimate suicide bomb implanted within the subject's chest cavity. A CED can be activated either by a remote signal or by the subject's neural command. TL9+, Cr5000. A CED cannot be detected by sensors of a TL lower than the bomb's TL.

Bionic Limbs – Limb replacements, that include a corresponding reinforcement of the associated joint interface to the body, can provide greatly increased physical characteristics as well as providing additional benefits.

- **Bionic Legs:** Doubles character's speed, no fatigue from running. Doubles strength for running/jumping related tasks. Gain the Great Leaper trait. TL 12. Cost: Cr50000
- **Bionic Arms:** Doubles strength and dexterity for arm/manipulation tasks. TL 11. Cost: Cr20000 per arm
- **Prehensile Tail:** Provides an additional grasping/manipulating appendage. Strong enough to support the weight of the owner. TL 10. Cost: Cr25000

Hyper-Precise Joints – This implant replaces the character's joints and attending sinews, ligaments, and muscles with high-tech synthetic parts granting precision and stability of movement. The character gains a +2 DM to any task requiring fine coordination and stability, from surgery to aimed gunfire. TL12, Cr50000.

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Internal Weapon – The character has a small hand-gun sized weapon implanted in a limb, most commonly an arm. The weapon has an internal magazine equal to twice the normal magazine capacity of the weapon. Melee weapons, up to Blade-size can also be installed. Cost is 10 times the weapon's listed cost, at 3 TL's higher than the weapon is listed, minimum TL of 9. Internal Weapons can be detected on a Difficult (-2) Sensor Check.

Cybernetic Eye – Enhanced vision is provided; characters can select from the following options: Infra-Red, Light-Intensification, Telescopic, Data Display/Recorder,

- TL9: Telescopic. Cost: Cr10000
- TL11: Telescopic and Infra-Red or Light-Intensification. Cost: Cr25000
- TL13: Telescopic, Infra-Red, Light-Intensification and Data Display/Recorder. Cost: Cr40000.

Internal Equipment – The character can have a variety of equipment implanted into their body, most commonly in the stomach or chest area. Any item listed on CE72 may be implanted at two (2) TL's higher than the listed TL – minimum TL of 9. Cost of the implant is double the cost listed on the table, plus Cr1000.

Internal Stowage Pouch – An internal pouch, sealed from the body, and accessible via an artificial sphincter muscle installed in the abdomen, allows stowage of small items, up to 0.5 kg in weight. Any item stowed inside the pouch has a -4 DM on any Recon/Detection checks to be found. TL10, Cost: Cr2000.

Data Safe – At TL12, advanced cybernetics allow storing encrypted files in a distributed implant network within a subject's brain for Cr10000. Downloading the data requires a neural link to a TL12+ computer and the appropriate encryption key. TL11- sensors cannot detect that the implants. The implant is reusable and common among high-stakes data couriers.

Berserker Module – This systemic augmentation allows the character to continue normal functioning regardless of physical injury. As long as the character remains conscious, they use their full Characteristic DMs regardless of any characteristic damage for an hour following the initial injury. After this hour, however, the character starts suffering normal DM reductions, and is also Fatigued.

Artificial Gill – Implanted gills allows extraction of oxygen from water, allowing the augmented person to breathe for an unlimited time while submerged in water. The gill only functions on worlds with ATM 4-9. TL10, Cr7500.

Internal Breather – Implantation of the equivalent to a Combination Mask (CE77), allowing breathing of ATM 2-9. TL10, Cost: Cr1500.

Enhanced Reflexes -This implant augments the subject's neural system to allow faster instinctive reaction to incoming stimuli. This allows the character to dodge twice per round and negates the regular penalty from dodging. TL 11, Cost: Cr20000.

Neural Booster – This extensive network of neural augmentations allows the user to accelerate their brain activity and achieve perfect clarity and speed of thought. This has two advantages. The first is that the character may take two Significant Actions and two Minor Actions (or five Minor Actions) in each combat round, though this does not allow a character to move further than 12 meters in a single round. The second is that the character can concentrate at tasks to a super-human level; any task requiring intense concentration, such as picking a lock or repairing a delicate electronic system, enjoys DM +2. The effect lasts for one hour, and afterwards the user is Fatigued and may not use this implant until recovery. TL13, Cr100000.

Internal Thrusters – Special thrusters are mounted in the legs and hands allowing the ability to maneuver in zero-g. Use of the Zero-G skill is required to use a thrust pack accurately. Internal thrusters can only be used in micro-gravity environments and are only practical for journeys between spacecraft at Adjacent range. Also includes an internal fuel bladder providing 10 minutes of thrust. TL12, Cost: Cr10000. Refueling costs Cr500.

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Internal Generator – A small internal generator that converts body heat into electrical energy that can be used to recharge electrical equipment or energy weapons. The internal generator has a limited capacity, allowing the recharging of 1 weapon charge per hour. TL12, Cr5000.

Vacuum Adaptation – This experimental Reticulan cybernetic procedure modifies the body so that the outer skin is the equivalent to a Vacc suit (both for protection and armor). The eyes are protected by a clear, nictating membrane. The user must keep their mouths closed at all times, but an internal oxygen supply provides life support for up to 6 hours. TL 14, Cost: MCr5.

Neural Cyberspace Interface (NCI) – This implant allows its user to interface directly with any computer system capable of receiving remote input. At TL8, this costs Cr10000 and is little more than a “Cyber-Mouse” allowing the mental operation of a point-and-click GUI. At TL11, the price falls to Cr5000 and the character can mentally input text or sound to the target computer through neural command, and receive visual and audial optical through the respective nerves.

Hacking Module – This military-grade variant of the NCI allows a character to hack any computer with a wireless interface using their Computer skill – and Intrusion software (*CE 70*) loaded to an implanted computer can provide additional bonuses. TL11, cost Cr50000. At TL13, the cost rises to Cr250000, but the character may also attempt to hack any electronic system through micro-manipulation of internal electronic signals, even those without a wireless or other remote interface.

Internal Communicator – Beginning at TL8, an internal communicator can be placed in the body that can be used without speaking. At TL8, it is equivalent to a Personal Communicator, at TL10, a Short-Range Communicator, TL11 Medium Range Communicator, TL12 Long Range Communicator. Cost: Cr2000.

Implanted Computer – A fully-functional computer, as per *CE 68-70*, implanted into the brain and integrated with the neural system for input and output. At TL9, this functions as a Model/0 computer and costs Cr500. At TL11, this functions as a Model/1 computer and costs Cr2500. At TL13, this functions as Model/2 and costs Cr5000. The greatest benefit of TL11+ implanted computers is that their user may run Expert programs on them; at TL13, this means that the character may “slot” a single Expert-2 program at a time to gain a “proper” Level-1 in one skill.

Psionic Shield – A psionic shield is implanted under the skull. The shield is powered by the cyborg’s internal bioelectrical system and may be turned off when desired. TL13, MCr1.

Atmospheric Adaption – The subject is equipped with a variation of a combination mask that allows them to operate freely in a specific atmosphere type (ATM A, B, or C). TL11, Cost: Cr10,000 for A, Cr20,000 for B, Cr 40,000 for C.

Bioluminescence – The subject’s skin can emit low levels of light. The intensity of the light can be controlled, as can the color – within limits. The maximum luminescent output cannot exceed the output of an Electric Torch. TL12, Cr5,000.

Body Modifications

Cybernetics, taken to the most extreme; body modifications can be done for a variety of reasons from fashion statements to a necessary adaptation to a specific environment. Body modifications are not changes to a subject’s genetic structure and the traits are not passed down to any offspring. A character can only have one Body Modification at TL11; at TL13, the character can have 2 body modifications. The character also gains the Engineered trait at the TL of the mods. Cost is MCr10 per Modification.

- **Aquatic** – The subject has their limbs adapted to work more efficiently in water, artificial gills are installed. The subject acquires the Aquatic/Amphibious trait.
- **Fast Metabolism** – The subject has their metabolic rate adjusted. The subject acquires the Fast Metabolism trait. Any internally powered Augment operates at twice the normal efficiency.

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- Flyer – The subject is fitted with wings, membranes, or other devices that allow them to fly in a Standard or Dense atmosphere. If the character also has the Small Trait, they can fly in Thin atmospheres. If they have the Large Trait, they can only fly in Dense atmospheres.
- Heat/Cold Endurance – The subjects body is modified allowing them to have greater tolerance to either heat or cold (TL11) or both (TL13). The subject gains the Heat Resistance and/or Cold Resistance Trait.
- Heavy Gravity – The subject's bones and joints are reinforced to allow withstanding of high gravity conditions (up to 3.0 G).
- Large – The character has their frame enlarged so that they have the Large trait, Physical characteristics are adjusted per the Trait.
- Small – The character has their frame reduced so that they have the Small trait. Physical characteristics are adjusted per the Trait.
- Zero-Gravity – The subject is capable of living in zero-gravity without the normal long-term side effects such as bone density loss.

Cyborg Conversion

Beginning at TL12, advanced technology can repair even a broken body, replacing dead tissues with chromium and steel. Highly invasive cybernetics can bring a dead or dying person back to life, if their brain remains relatively intact and that the body is not overly mangled. This procedure is typically available only to the Reticulans and on the high-tech Terran worlds. Only the best hospitals offer this treatment, typically requiring many physicians, nurses, and technicians to perform. The Reticulans use such procedures to resurrect dead Imperial Legionnaires who have shown great martial prowess in their lives and induct them into the Immortal Cohorts – typically with extensive additional cybernetic modification.

As part of this operation, which by itself costs MCr6, any Augment of cybernetic nature may be installed at 75% as the massive cyber-surgery makes such installation easier. Note that dead bodies decompose with time and cyborg conversion cannot restore a person dead for over a month; a “low berth” or cryoberth can, however, preserve a body indefinitely while “freezing” its state, so to speak. When performing cyborg conversion, the head surgeon makes a Very Difficult (-4) Medic check. The result depends on the Effect of this Medic check, as shown on the table below.

Cyborg Conversion Results

Effect	Result
-6	The character cannot be revived even with advanced cybernetics and will stay dead. No further attempts may be made to bring the character back to life.
-5	The cyborg arises from the dead, but is violently and irreparably insane due to faulty wiring and programming. The character awakens with full characteristic values as they had in life, and attacks everyone next to them with murderous rage. The character cannot be calmed down or repaired and must be put down.
-2 to -4	The procedure fails. Further cyborg conversion or bio reconstruction attempts may be made, but at a DM -2 and double cost. Negative DMs and cost multiplication are cumulative for repeated attempts, e.g. a third attempt after failing twice at this level will suffer DM -4 and will have a quadruple cost.
-1	The character is restored to life with 1 point of Endurance. However, their body did not recover well from the cybernetic implantation process, causing severe side effects. Roll 1D6: 1-2, the character loses their memory; 3-4, the character is only partially alive and suffers from cybernetic mismatch; 5-6, the character will occasionally suffer from sudden and unexpected fits of murderous rage. Further surgery and healing follow the standard healing rules.
0	The character is restored to life with 1 point of Endurance, though still bearing marks of terrible injury. Roll 1D6: 1-2 the character suffers from partial memory loss; 3-4, the character will have severe recurring nightmares; 5-6, the character will undergo a profound personality change. Further surgery and healing follow the standard healing rules.
1 to 5	The character is well-restored to life as a cyborg with full Endurance and will recover fully with Medical Care. However, they suffer moderate damage due to imperfect cyber-implantation. Roll 1D6: 1-2, the character will be sickly; 3-4, the character suffers physical characteristic loss; 5-6, the character suffers from shaking. Further surgery and healing follow the standard healing rules.
6 or more	The character is lucky and awakens with full Endurance and one point each in Strength and Dexterity – and no perceptible side effects. Further surgery and healing follow the standard healing rules.
DMs: -2 at TL12, +0 at TLs 13; -2 per previous successful cyborg conversion; -1 per previous successful bio reconstruction; -1 if more than 24 hours has passed since the character’s death; -3 if more than one week has passed since the character’s death; cannot perform the procedure on characters’ dead more than a single month unless cryogenically preserved; -2 if thawed from a cryoberth or “low berth”.	

Cyborg Conversion Side Effects

Here is a list the effects of the various inflictions caused by the above table.

Cybernetic Mismatch: The character is neither alive nor dead, and teeters constantly on death’s door, held alive only by cybernetics on one hand and suffering from cybernetic rejection on the other. The character suffers DM -2 to all skill and characteristic throws and only has half of their movement rate (in most cases, 3 meters per minor action). Every month, the character must roll END 8+ or die from cybernetic rejection.

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Memory Loss, Full: The character suffers from complete amnesia, though they will retain basic life skills and partial adventuring skills. Halve the character's EDU score, rounding down to a minimum of 1. Also, for each skill, throw INT 6+ or lose one level of the skill; a skill-0 reduced in such manner is lost.

Memory Loss, Partial: The character loses part of their memory but retains a general idea of their identity, as well as most skills. The character loses 1d3 points of EDU to a minimum of 1. Also, reduce one of the character's skills which are at a level of 1 or higher – chosen at random – to Skill-0.

Personality Change: The character retains their memories intact, but will change personality in a profound manner, as negotiated between player and Referee.

Physical Characteristic Loss: The character was not completely healed and suffers from reduced abilities. Roll 1D: 1-2, the character loses 1d3 points of Strength; 3-4, the character loses 1D3 points of Dexterity; 5-6, the character loses 1d3 points of Endurance. The Characteristics cannot go below 1.

Recurring Nightmares: The character suffers from memories of being dead and other negative visages and will invariably suffer from severe recurring nightmares every night, preventing healthy sleep. Thus, the character will suffer from severe insomnia, causing a constant DM -1 penalty to all skill and characteristic throws.

Sickly: The character's body does not fully recover from being dead, and their metabolism is far weaker. Halve the character's END score, rounding down to a minimum of 1. The character also suffers DM -2 to all rolls made to resist disease, poison, radiation, or any other biological effect.

Shaking: The character's cybernetic neural wiring and servos did not calibrate well, and they suffer from constantly shaky hands, causing a DM -1 to skill and characteristic throws and other actions requiring steady hands.

Sudden Murderous Rage: The character awakens as normal but the cybernetic system will eventually show critical and dangerous glitches. At times left to the Referee's discretion (recommended every week or every month, depending on how much the Referee is merciful), the character must roll INT 8+ or END 8+ (whichever is better) or fly into a murderous rage lasting 2D combat rounds, doing their best to kill any living or mechanical being in reach. After this period, they will return to normal functioning but will not remember any of the actions under this rage.

Chapter 4 – Starships

“Three centuries ago, Flying Saucers, also called ‘Unidentified Flying Objects’ –‘UFOs’ – were little more than an urban myth. When Terra first reached to the stars with primitive chemical rockets, the collective imagination of our ancestors filled with images of star travel, spaceships, and alien beings. Little did they know that there was a grain of truth behind the so-called wild and crazed tales of flying saucers abducting human beings and animals. In the late 21st century, we finally met the “Saucer People” – the Reticulans - and they proceeded to conquer us. The Flying Saucer changed from an icon of science-fiction wonder into the symbol of our subjugation. But in the 23rd century we rose up, and then the Flying Saucer changed its role again – from the stigmata of our slavery, to an enemy seen through the targeting screens of our gunners. Only then, observing the Reticulans through our gun sights, we came to terms with the ‘UFOs’ of old – and blew them to pieces”.

- Admiral Nadezhda Lambert, “From Chains to the Stars”, published May 2256 on Terra

Starships are staples of space opera, the genre to which **These Stars Are Ours!** belongs. Within the following pages, we present a selection of starships which would be of great use to adventures in this setting. While these are by no means dedicated warships – except for the Military Saucer – they all have their places in interstellar subterfuge and swashbuckling. These are the tools and playthings of plucky Terran traders, scheming Reticulan savants, dashing Cicek pirates, Zhuzzh salvagers of shady reputation, and cunning Ssesslessian assassins. All ships come with full deck plans, ready for interstellar action, and we depict them against the background of stars. But before that, we also provide several variant rules making space travel somewhat more varied and more in tune with the spirit of this setting.

Variant Starship Rules

The following rules are all optional, of course, but we strongly recommend using them to better convey the flavor of the setting described in this book. They cover anything from advanced sensors and armories to steerage passage and buying ships second-hand, and would surely add interest to the game and make space travel in general, and starships more unique and varied.

The following is Open Content material

Additional and Modified Ship Rules

Advanced Sensors

The Cepheus Engine provides sensors up to Tech Level 12. However, sensor technology continues to advance with higher tech levels. This is especially important as the Reticulan Empire routinely employs stealth technology, forcing its enemies to invest heavily in sensor technology to counter it. For the sake of this setting, where the maximal Tech Level is TL13, we add Highly Advanced sensors, as given in the table below:

System	TL	DM	Includes	Tons	Cost
Highly Advanced	13	3	As per Very Advanced sensors, with the addition of advanced computer hardware and software filters for better results and countering stealth technology	10	8

Breaching Tubes

All airlocks include flexible plastic docking tubes that allow passengers to cross from one ship to another by floating through the air-filled tube. A breaching tube is a military version of the common docking tube. Instead of a thin plastic tube, the breaching tube is made of a combination of ballistic cloth and reflec. The breaching tube does not end in a docking collar, but in a magnetic clamp with a ring of plasma torches that can burn through the hull of an enemy vessel when attached.

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To use the breaching tube, the craft must be adjacent to the target vessel and then succeed in a docking action. As the vessel does not have to line up with an airlock, this maneuver is easier than using a normal docking tube and receives a +1 DM if the boarding vessel does not want to enter via the airlock.

If access is acquired via an airlock the plasma torches quickly burn through the airlock and boarding can begin immediately. If trying to get through the hull, the plasma torches will take 1 full turn to cut through, increasing by 1 turn for each 2 points of armor (round down). Each breaching tube provides 5 points of armor against personal and vehicle weapons and 10 points of armor against lasers. A hit from a starship weapon will destroy the breaching tube if a successful Point Defense roll is made.

A breaching tube takes up three tons of space and costs MCr3.

Low Berths

The Low Berths in this setting are different from the ones depicted in the Cepheus Engine. The main difference is that our version is safer at higher tech levels. Advanced berths rarely kill passengers, but they may cause injuries, including severe ones, unless the berth in question is a highly-advanced model.

Tech Level 9 and lower Low Berths follow the Cepheus Engine Low Berth rules as written, including a chance of death from cryogenic failure. Using such primitive contraptions is very risky, and most people will avoid this unless dire circumstances require such an attempt.

In Tech Levels 10 to 12, under standard procedure, preparing a passenger for low passage takes 1-6 hours and requires the presence of a medic (but no task roll). Reviving a low passenger is a Medic, Endurance, 1-6 hours, Easy (+4) task using the passenger's Endurance DM. In both cases one medic could simultaneously work on up to 20 low berths, but the medic must make a separate task roll for each passenger they attempt to revive. A failed revival roll results in 3D6 normal damage rather than instant death. Healthy low passengers frozen and revived per the standard procedure rarely die, but may need prompt medical attention in some cases. Infirm, ill or wounded passengers are at greater risk.

In emergencies, however, it is possible to quickly freeze a passenger, taking only 10-60 seconds and requiring no medic to be present. This emergency procedure is automated and may even be initiated by the passenger themselves using an override switch inside the low berth. Reviving a passenger frozen in this manner is subject to a -2 DM.

It is also possible to quickly revive a low passenger using the emergency revival procedure, which is a Medic, Endurance 1-6 minutes, Average (+0) task using the passenger's Endurance DM. This can either be done by a medic or by triggering an automated override failsafe mechanism of the low berth (which is treated as if it had Medic 0 for this purpose). A failed emergency revival roll causes a roll on the Injury table (Page 93). Damage is permanent unless treated in a hospital of TL10 or better. If a low berth loses external (ship) power, its internal backup batteries sustain the passenger for six hours; if no external power is restored before the end of that period, this triggers the above-mentioned failsafe mechanism, thawing, and waking the passenger.

Tech Level 13 (and above) Low Berths are even safer and enjoy a further +1 DM to all related task rolls. A failed revival roll using standard procedure causes only 1D6 damage, and a failed emergency revival roll causes only 3D6 regular damage and no roll on the Injury table.

Medlabs

As fully-fledged hospitals are uncommon among distant stars, many ships carry their own medical facilities with them. There are two general types of shipboard Medlabs in this setting: Standard and Dedicated.

The stateroom tonnage and cost include those of the ship's standard Medlab. Assume 0.25 tons of medical equipment available per stateroom – small ships have medical equipment lockers and a folding stretcher or two, while larger ships have actual infirmaries. Regardless of size, Standard Medlabs have paramedic-level or

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ambulance-level equipment. While they allow the administration of rudimentary surgery and long-term care, they incur a -2 DM to these tasks due to the limited equipment available. Furthermore, the Referee may decide that certain medical procedures would be too complex for such basic facilities to perform. Standard Medlabs do not provide any additional life support beyond what the ship's staterooms already provide.

Dedicated Medlab units displace 8 tons, cost MCr2 and provides facilities – including dedicated life support and intensive care – for up to two patients. Each additional patient capacity requires an additional 2 tons and MCr0.25. It contains equipment and facilities on par with those of a small clinic or a tiny hospital, allowing the performance of most medical tasks without additional difficulty. Each Dedicated Medlab unit requires one medic per four patients (or a fraction thereof), and in many cases a ship would carry as many Dedicated Medlabs as it has medics in its crew listing. A Dedicated Medlab includes one medical-purpose Low Berth per patient it has capacity for.

Reticulan Gravitics

The TL11-TL12 Terran and Cicek magneto-gravitic Maneuver Drives can only create crude gravity fields. They allow reactionless propulsion and shipboard gravity but not fine manipulation of gravitational forces. They also create considerable heat and a visual particle “exhaust” when generating significant acceleration. The Reticulans, on the other hand, enjoy the benefits of advanced gravitic cores. These Maneuver Drives can create reactionless acceleration just like a simpler Terran engine, but are also capable of fine manipulation of gravity. This allows different gravities on different parts of the ship. This also allows the Reticulan ship to hover above ground and use its Drive's gravitic power to lift or lower cargoes and passengers to and from the surface without physical landing. The Reticulan ships' slender landing supports are for emergency use only in the case of engine failure.

Reticulan Stealth Technology

A prominent element of Reticulan spacefaring technology is the use of stealth components, combined with advanced electronic warfare systems to render their ships extremely difficult to locate and lock on by average sensors. This technology is a carefully-guarded secret of the Reticulans, and it requires highly complex materials usually unavailable to other species. While the Terrans have found workarounds to allow for their own stealth ships, and while the Reticulan Technate exports stealth technology, such systems are expensive. Therefore, in this setting, anyone but the Reticulans – and the Ssesslessians who use ships which were once built by Reticulans – pays double the cost for stealth systems.

Ship Maintenance

The ships of this setting are archetypically built for long-range operations and thus require maintenance on an annual rather than a monthly basis. System degradation starts only if the yearly maintenance date has passed with no actual maintenance performed, though you must calculate the degradation DM is per month after the missed annual maintenance date.

Shrine

Ssesslessians are devout beings, and most will never leave port without the protection of their many gods. Thus, each Ssesslessian starship carries a religious Shrine, filled with several gilded idols of the more prominent Old Gods. Such Shrine costs MCr0.1 and displaces 4 tons. Each Shrine requires a Cleric, and as a rule of a thumb, a Ssesslessian starship requires one shrine per 20 crewmembers (or a fraction thereof). Other religious groups may also include a Shrine if desired.

Simulated Intelligence (TL13)

Advanced computer algorithms running on a powerful computer can perform highly complex tasks autonomously and appear “intelligent” upon cursory examination. They are not truly self-aware, however, and might encounter difficulties where there is need of non-procedural thinking or “intuition”. The Simulated Intelligence ship computer program is an advanced, powerful version of the ordinary Intellect software and Expert programs

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(CE70) designed to run on ship mainframes and capable of conducting highly complex spacecraft operations. This program can use the Pilot, Navigation, Engineering, and Electronic skills in any task using the ship's own systems, and, combined with Auto-Repair (CE126) and Repair Drones, it may also use the Mechanic, Gravitics, and Engineering skills for any shipboard task, using the drone as its "eyes and hands". Note that Simulated Intelligence will encounter difficulties when faced with complex, unpredictable situations requiring true self-aware sentience and will then suffer negative DMs at the Referee's discretion; thus, most military starships and some civilian ones will prefer to employ a full sophont crew even when using a Simulated Intelligence to carry out day-to-day tasks.

Simulated Intelligence comes in two versions - Simulated Intelligence I and Simulated Intelligence II, as noted below.

Simulated Intelligence I - MCr1, Rating 10, has skill-1 in Pilot, Navigation, Engineering, Electronics, Mechanics and Gravitics. May only use one skill at a time.

Simulated Intelligence II - MCr10, Rating 15, has skill-1 in Pilot, Navigation, Engineering, Electronics, Mechanics and Gravitics. May use up to two skills simultaneously.

Note that all races in this setting have regulations requiring at least one person with the necessary skills to be aboard. There are no robotic ships in this setting – although theoretically, there could be.

Small Craft Acceleration Couches

The small craft Cabin Space given in the Cepheus Engine ship rules represents comfortable accommodations for long-duration travel and activity on board a small craft. However, shorter journeys do not require so much elbow room. Acceleration Couches, displacing 0.5 ton and costing Cr25000 each, may be installed in small craft. Each acceleration couch can carry one human-sized being – including full combat gear if necessary - with moderate comfort for up to 12 hours and with some discomfort up to 24 hours. Longer stays require full Cabin Space to be bearable. Like many other small craft features, Acceleration Couches can be easily installed or removed from a vessel, each requiring a Mechanic, Dexterity, 10-60 minutes, Easy (+4) task to install or remove.

Static Pulser (TL13)

The Static Pulser is a specialized electronic warfare system used by the Reticulans, and recently produced by the Terrans as well, despite its expense – though it is typically imported from the Technate. It uses a massive barrage of multi-frequency radio waves and magnetic pulses to overwhelm the target's electronic systems and render it helpless in space – perfect for abducting its occupants. A Static Pulser requires one Hardpoint to install, fills 2 tons, and costs MCr6. On Small Craft, it counts as two energy weapons. It works only in Close or Adjacent range.

Using a Static Pulser requires an Engineering 8+ roll to hit; the Reticulan engineer typically operates this weapon as part of her duties. On any successful hit, roll 1D6; on 1-2 the target's sensors suffer one level of damage (as per the combat rules), while on 3-6 the target's computer suffers one level of damage, as given below. An Effects of 3+ on this Engineering roll causes two "hits", and Exceptional Success (Effect 6+) means that the target ship is completely and immediately paralyzed. Ships with "hardened" (fib) computers cause a DM -4 to the Static Pulser's Engineer roll. Note that at this magnitude of power, a successful hit on an Engineering 8+ roll will simply fry the electronic systems of a regular (non-spacecraft) vehicle, as was demonstrated in many early encounters between Reticulan Military Saucers on scouting missions and Terran aircraft in the early scouting expeditions of the 20th century, back when Reticulans were thought to be an urban myth by most of Humanity.

Computer: The computer is hit.

First Hit: The computer is scrambled. Until the computer is repaired, the ship suffers a -2 DM to all Sensor, Pilot, and Gunnery rolls and its maneuver rating is halved (round down – a ship only capable of 1-G maneuver is unable to maneuver).

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Second Hit: The computer is disabled. The ship cannot make any Pilot or Sensor rolls and cannot maneuver; it loses any benefits from software until the computer is repaired. manual gunnery is still possible at a -2 DM and without the benefit of any assisting software.

Third Hit: The computer is completely burned out.

Subsequent Hits: No effect.

Steerage Passage

During the long War years, soldiers traveled in crowded quarters using double occupancy. Similarly, in the austerity conditions of the war economy, many civilian passengers travelled in such a way. This form of transit is called Steerage and costs Cr5000 per parsec; each Steerage passenger is allowed for 50kg of cargo. Passengers of this type do not receive any steward services and either eat at the crew mess or prepare their own meals from basic supplies at a kitchenette located in the passenger common area. Finding Steerage passengers uses the same procedure as Middle passengers, but passenger numbers are doubled.

Used and Military Surplus Starships

Many ships serve for decades or even centuries before being scrapped. Necessity often forces adventurers and free traders to purchase outdated or damaged vessels instead of new or pristine ships. Furthermore, with the demobilization of the Terran fleets after the War, the Navy decommissioned and sold off many older ships, available for cheap purchase by private parties. They may be up to 50 years old – including old EFA ships from before the War – and cost 10% less per decade of age.

Most used starships will require at least the equivalent of an Annual Overhaul before being spaceworthy. Additionally, as ships age, they also develop little quirks or idiosyncrasies and are more expensive to maintain. For each decade of wear, rounded down, roll once on the Quirks table below. Thus, a ship that is 23 years old would require two rolls on the Quirks table.

Maintenance Costs

Maintaining a ship costs credits and the older the ship, the more it costs to maintain. Annual maintenance must be undertaken each year, and takes two weeks at a Class A or B starport. Missing the annual maintenance check increases the risk of malfunction, as per the maintenance rules in the *Cepheus Engine* rules.

The following table shows the annual maintenance costs of an older ship.

Age of Vessel	Annual Maintenance Cost
<10 years	0.05% cost of new ship
11-30 years	0.1% cost of new ship
31-40 years	0.15% cost of new ship
41-50 years	0.175% cost of new ship
>50 years	0.2% cost of new ship

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Ship Quirks

For each 10-year term of wear, choose what role that ship was engaged in (Civilian, Military, or Other) and roll on the table below:

D66	Civilian	Military	Other
11	Well Maintained: Reduce Maintenance Costs by 10%	Upgrade Sensors to next best type ¹	Luxurious starship: +1 DM to all Steward checks
12	Good Shape: Reduce Maintenance Costs by 5%	Vessel is equipped with an extra turret (if possible) ¹	Library computer contains secret or unusual information
13	Ship is famous and respected trader, with a good reputation; +1 to all Trade and Passenger rolls	Ship served with distinction and has a good reputation	Upgrade Computer to next best Model (or equip with FIB or BIS)
14	Upgrade computer by one model	Add a weapon costing up to 2 MCr. ¹	Armored: increase ships armor by 1D6 points ¹ (not to exceed TL max)
15	Vessel is equipped with an extra turret (if possible) ¹	Upgrade a Turret to a Barbette ¹	Good Reputation: +1 DM on all Law Level checks
16	Vessel Contains Concealed Smuggling Compartment (1d6 tons) ¹	Well Maintained: Reduce Maintenance Costs by 10%	Pop-Up Turret: one of the ship's Hardpoint is equipped with a pop-up turret ¹
21	Fuel Smart: Ship requires 5% less fuel for every operation	Fuel Smart: Ship requires 5% less fuel for every operation	Library computer contains erroneous information
22	Sluggish Controls: -1 DM to all Initiative rolls in Space Combat	Sluggish Controls: -1 DM to all Initiative rolls in Space Combat	Vessel contains disturbing psionic echoes (ship is 'haunted')
23	Ship is equipped for non-oxygen breathers	Buggy Sensors: Each combat turn, roll 2D6. On a 12, the sensors lose their lock	All lights blink every time the ship enters or leaves jump-space
24	A ship system is one TL below the design TL ¹	One system aboard has been jury-rigged (CE 102) but still functions	Ship groans and creaks all the time and no number of repairs will correct it
25	Hull is patched with different TL of materials, doubling all Hull repair costs unless entire hull is replaced	Hull is patched with different TL of materials, doubling all Hull repair costs unless entire hull is replaced	The ship has a funny or unusual smell. No amount of Life Support repairs will correct the issue
26	Computer Glitch: -1 DM to all Jump rolls	Computer Glitch: -1 DM to all Jump rolls (CE 105)	The ship is infested with some kind of vermin (mice, roaches, etc.)
31-36	Damaged: roll 1D6-1 and consult the Combat Damage table	Damaged: Roll 2D6-2 and consult the Combat Damage table (CE159)	Damaged: Roll 1D6-1 and consult the Combat Damage table
41	Damaged Sensors: -1 DM to all Sensor Checks	Damaged Sensors: -1 to all Sensor Checks	Life Support Problems: Every month roll 2D6, on a 12 the ship's air takes on a foul stench and the life support system must be overhauled to correct (1d6% of annual maintenance costs)
42	Damaged Hull: -1 Hull	Damaged Hull: -1d6 Hull	Damaged: -1D3 Hull
43	Damaged Structure: -1 Structure ²	Damaged Structure: -1d3 Structure ²	Damaged Structure: -1 Structure ²
44	Damaged Thrusters: -1 DM to all Pilot Checks	Damaged Thrusters: -1 DM to all Pilot Checks	Damaged Transponder: Every jump, roll 2D6. On 10+, the Transponder fails
45	Damaged M-Drive: -1G Acceleration	Damaged M-Drive: -1G acceleration	Ship is Out of Rig: The hull and structure are twisted, doubling all maintenance and repair costs
46	Damaged J-Drive: -1 Hex Range	Damaged J-Drive: -1 Hex range	Missing Escape Pods: All of the escape pods are missing and the space has been used for something else
51	Blacklisted: Trader will be impounded in 1d6 systems. -1 DM to all Broker checks	Vessel was involved in a notorious battle and has enemies who wish to destroy it	Leaky reactor core: Roll 2D6 when the ship jumps. On a 12, everyone is exposed to 20 Rads
52	Cargo Bay tainted by chemical spills and leaks. Vulnerable cargoes may be damaged in transit	Ammunition Magazine missing	Bad Reputation, -1 DM on all Law Level checks
53	Poorly Maintained: increase all Maintenance costs by 10%	Poorly Maintained: increase all Maintenance costs by 10%	Poorly Maintained: increase all Maintenance costs by 10%
54	Rust Bucket: Increase all Maintenance costs by 50%	Rust Bucket: Increase all Maintenance costs by 50%	Bounty Hunters are chasing a previous owner
55	Falling Apart: Increase first Annual Maintenance cost by 1D6x100% and all subsequent Maintenance costs are doubled	Falling Apart: Increase first Annual Maintenance cost by 1D6x100% and all subsequent Maintenance costs are doubled	Falling Apart: Increase first Annual Maintenance cost by 1D6x100% and all subsequent Maintenance costs are doubled
56	Fuel Hog: Ship uses 5% more fuel for every operation ¹	Fuel Hog: Ship uses 5% more fuel for every operation ¹	Vessel was stolen
61-65	Roll on 'Other' Column	Roll on 'Other' column	Roll twice
66	Roll Twice	Roll twice	Roll twice

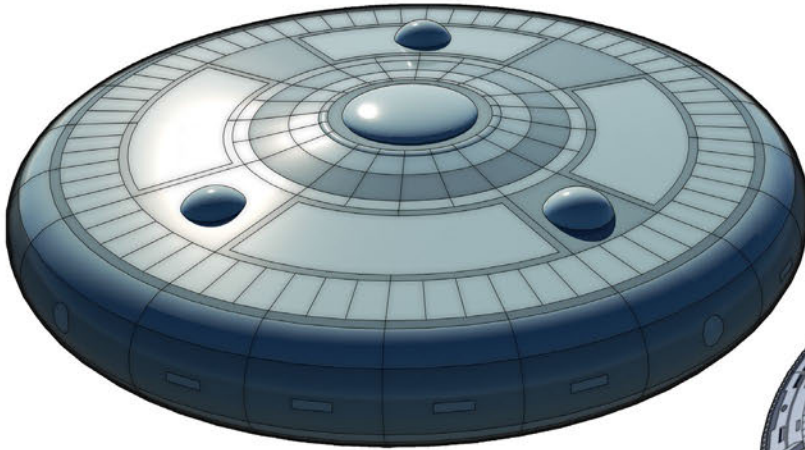
¹ These options may result in additional tonnage being added to the design. Remove tons from the cargo bay if necessary to make room.

² If the ship has Structure of 0 or less, it is not space-worthy and will disintegrate within 1d6 minutes of leaving atmosphere. It can be flown within an atmosphere, but will come apart the moment it hits severe weather, gets hit by an attack, or undergoes stressful maneuvers, or otherwise comes under strain.

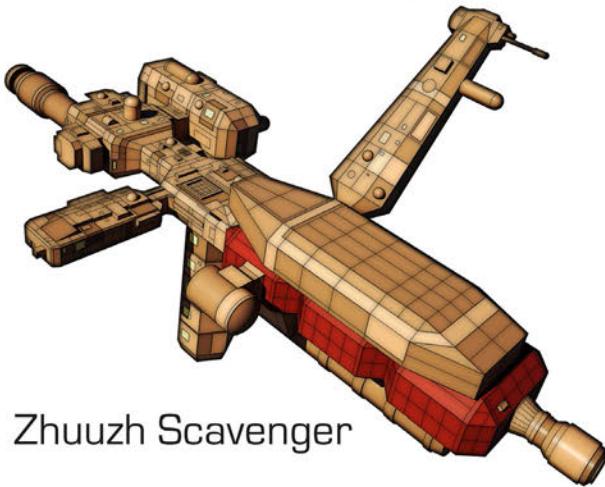
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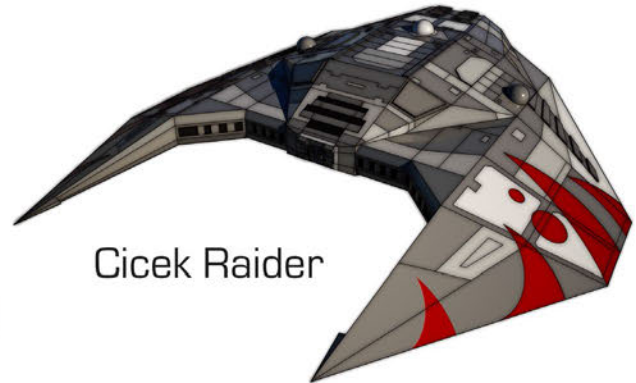
Reticulan Abductor



Reticulan Saucers



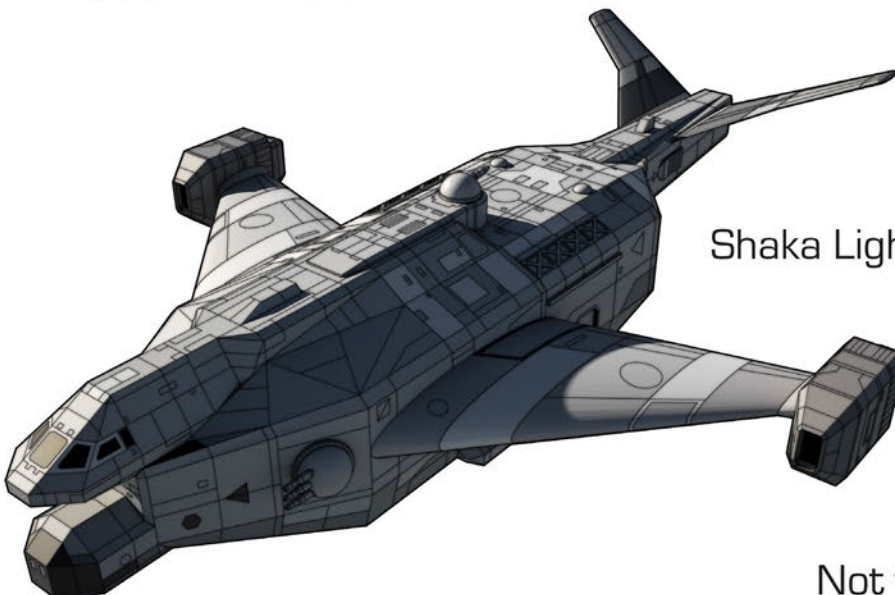
Zhuuzh Scavenger



Cicek Raider



Ssesslessian Infiltrator

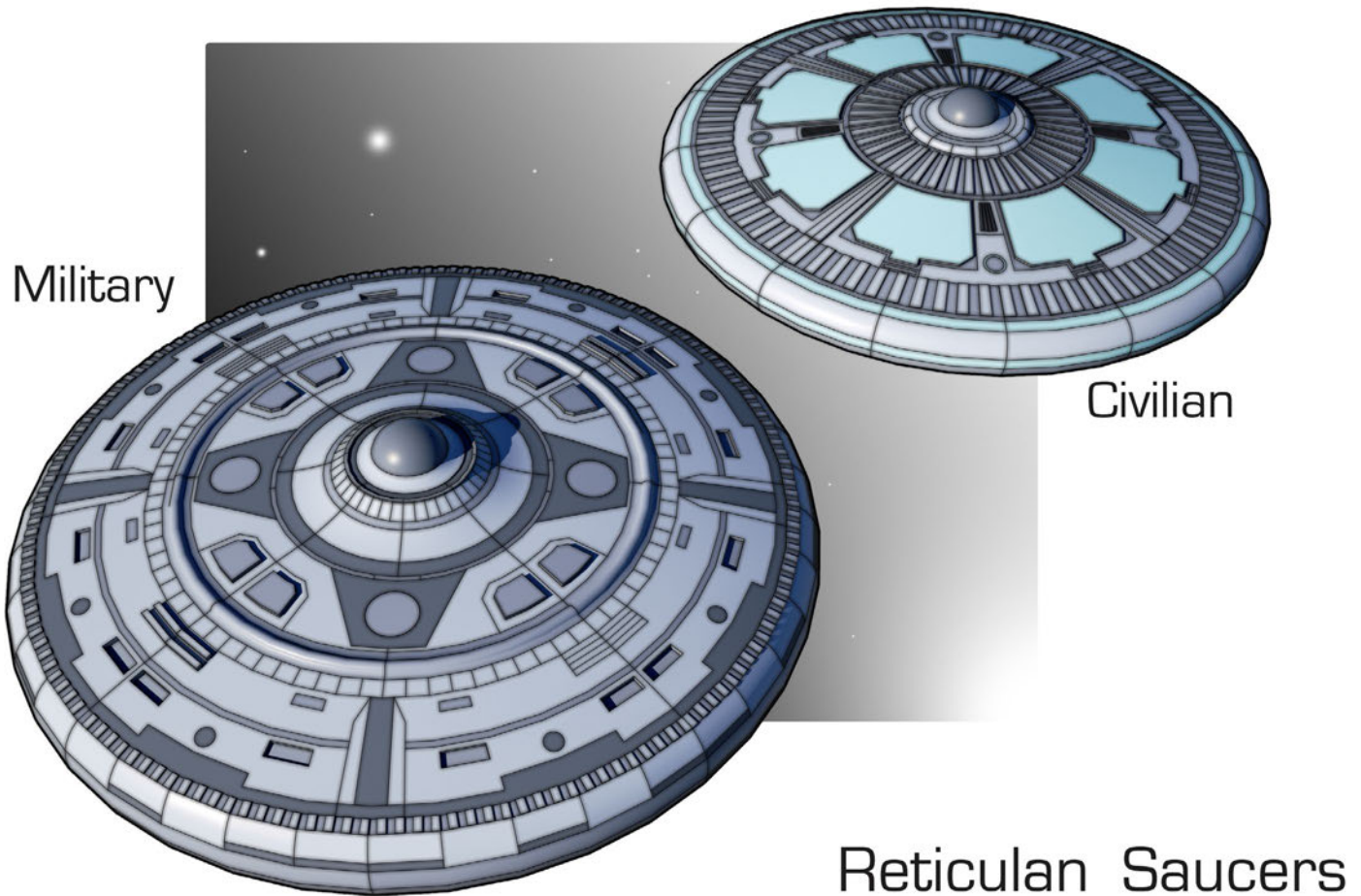


Shaka Light Transport

Not to Scale

Small Craft

Naturally enough, the various sentient species of this universe use a wide variety of small craft. In this chapter, we will present the most iconic of them: the famous Reticulan Saucer. For most Terran small craft, you can easily adapt the designs presented in CE, and with some slight modifications they will work for Cicek, Zhuzzh and Ssesslessian small craft as well.



Reticulan Saucers

30-ton Reticulan Civilian Saucer

The space vessel which comes to mind when someone thinks of a “Reticulan ship” is the Saucer. This is the workhorse of Reticulan interstellar society – highly standardized, highly efficient, and very easily reconfigurable for a wide variety of roles. Components, from lab modules to staterooms, are completely modular and are easy to install and remove. Furthermore, as Saucer Tenders – commonly available in most Reticulan star systems and in alien space around the Reticulan border - can carry Saucers between star systems, they are a favorite method of travel for Reticulans who do not have to leave the comfort of their own ship when traveling, but instead fly it in-system and then dock with a Tender to jump to the next one.

There are several common configurations, the most well-known of these is the Exploration version installing advanced sensors, two staterooms for extended stay and a small lab; a residential variant carrying staterooms and some Luxuries; and a shorter-range shuttle version carrying a combination of Small Craft Acceleration Couches and cargo space. The data below describes the “base” saucer, without additional components installed – this can be reconfigured by the owner after purchase at any Starport C or better in Reticulan space.

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Using a 30-ton hull (0 Hull, 1 Structure), the Reticulan Civilian Saucer is a common sight in Reticulan space. It mounts maneuver drive sE and power plant sG, giving a performance of 3-G acceleration. Fuel tankage of 3 tons supports the power plant for 4 weeks. Adjacent to the 2-person Control Cabin is a computer Model3. Standard software load includes: Fire Control/1 and Simulated Intelligence/1. The ship is equipped with Military sensors (+0 DM). The ship has 1 hardpoint and 1 ton allocated for fire control. Installed on the hardpoint is a single Beam Laser. Reconfigurable cargo capacity is 10.5 tons. The hull is streamlined with Self-Sealing and Stealth options. Special features include Fuel Scoops and an Airlock. The ship requires a crew of 1: Pilot; although the Simulated Intelligence program makes the ship self-guiding. The ship can carry up to 1 additional passenger in the Control Cabin. The ship costs MCr19.940 and takes 30 weeks to build.

Saucer Familiarity

The Reticulans have been using Saucers – both military and civilian – for centuries. As technology advanced, they upgraded a few systems, but the most basic layout and work interfaces have changed very little. As Reticulans use saucers extensively, their shipyards, technicians, and pilots know them inside and out, and finding spare parts for a Saucer is easy on any Reticulan world but the most remote and desolate.

Thus, Saucers enjoy the following benefits:

- A Reticulan engineer attempting to repair or jury-rig any system on a Saucer enjoys a +1 DM to her task roll.
- A Reticulan pilot flying a Saucer enjoys a +1 DM to her Pilot rolls.
- Annual maintenance, spare parts, and repairs for a Saucer at any Reticulan starport enjoy a 10% discount.

30-ton Reticulan Military Saucer

Like the Civilian Saucer described above, the Military Saucer is the workhorse of the Reticulan military. Fast, stealthy, and equipped with advanced electronics and a devastating Pulse Laser, this sleek small craft can serve for a wide variety of purposes from a heavy fighter to reconnaissance craft to light troop transport.

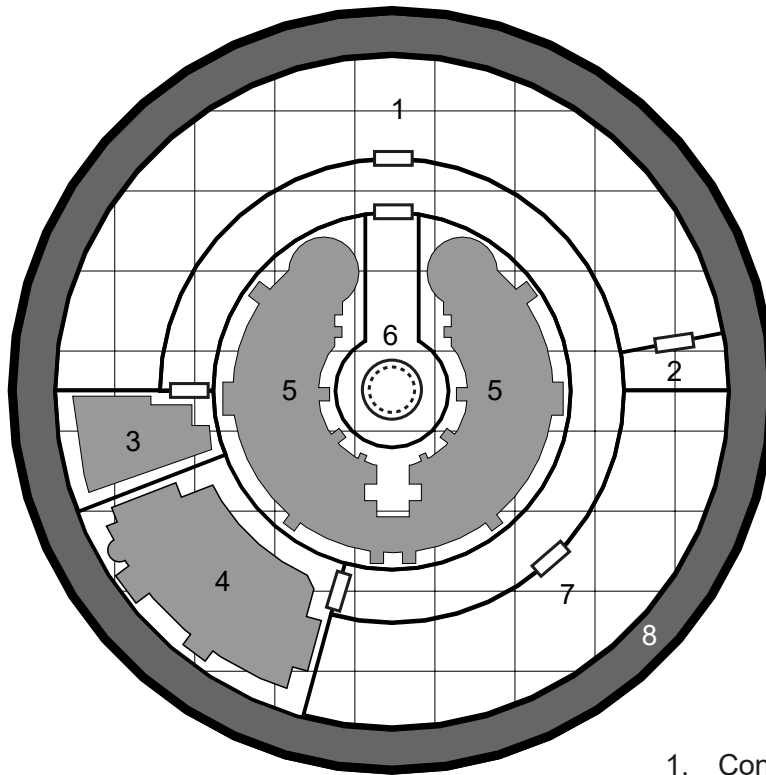
Using a 30-ton hull (0 Hull, 1 Structure), the Reticulan Military Saucer is a feared sight throughout the Empire. It mounts maneuver drive sJ and power plant sJ, giving a performance of 6-G acceleration. Fuel tankage of 4.8 tons supports the power plant for 4 weeks. Adjacent to the 2-person Control Cabin is a computer Model 5. Standard software load includes: Evade/1, Fire Control/1, and Simulated Intelligence/1. The ship is equipped with Advanced sensors (+1 DM). The ship has 1 hardpoint and 1 ton allocated for fire control. Installed on the hardpoint is a Particle Beam. Cargo capacity is 3.6 tons. The hull is Streamlined, and is armored with Crystaliron (4 points) with Self Sealing and Stealth options. Special features include Fuel Scoops and an Airlock. The ship requires a crew of 1: Pilot; although the Simulated Intelligence program makes the ship self-guiding. The ship can carry up to 1 additional passenger. The ship costs MCr38.180 and takes 30 weeks to build.

Lightning and Thunderstorm

Procyon c is a major Reticulan industrial world. When Terran forces captured it, the local (Reticulan) Technocratic movement welcomed them as liberators. As the assault was swift and as Terran forces received significant support from the said Technocratic underground, most of Procyon's industrial base remained intact, including the massive small-craft shipyards manufacturing saucers for the Empire. With the Imperial overseers removed by the occupation government, the newly-established Technocratic Syndicate of Shipbuilders took over the shipyards, and offered to manufacture the same saucers for Terran use.

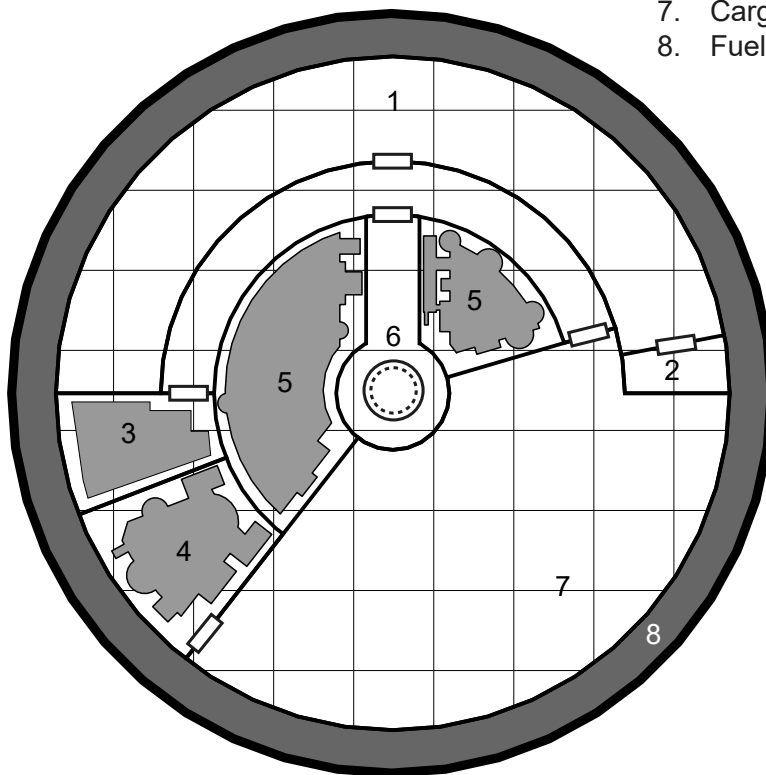
With the help of Terran naval engineers, the Syndicate converted the standard Saucers for Terran use. The main change was an interface more amenable to Terran standards, including human-adapted controls and the Terran "Solar Wind" open-source Operating System. Today, the Reticulan Technate aggressively markets these Saucers to Terran buyers under the brand name "Lightning" for the civilian variant and "Thunderstorm" for the military variant. In game terms, they cost MCr0.9 less and lack the Intellect software. Otherwise, except for not granting their pilots the +1 DM to Pilot rolls, they function exactly as the respective standard Reticulan versions.

Reticulan Military Saucer



1. Control Cabin
2. Fresher
3. Life Support & Computer
4. Ships Sensors
5. Power Plant and M-Drive
6. Airlock (Floor)/Turret Access (Ceiling)
7. Cargo/ Reconfigurable Space
8. Fuel Tank

Reticulan Civilian Saucer



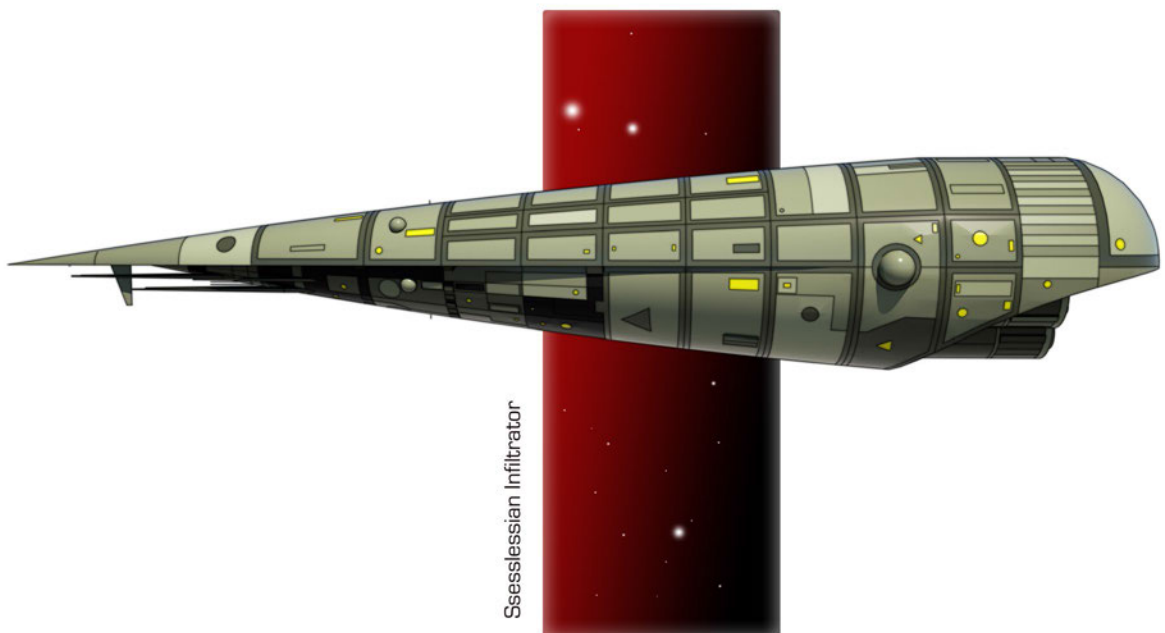
Starships

This book would be incomplete without a selection of ‘proper’ starships prowling the dark between the stars. Each of the five vessels presented within this book can serve as the center-piece of an adventure, or, conversely, as a springboard for other adventures – as it conveys the player characters between the stars. We also provide full deckplans drawn using vector technology, for your pleasure of printing them at a high resolution and using them to plot daring action in deep space involving humans and aliens alike. We tried to provide you with a balanced mix of ships useful for adventuring. While actual warships might be absent from these pages, and while the selection is somewhat narrow, Stellagama Publishing will publish additional ship designs in the future, all suited for **These Stars Are Ours!**

200-ton Ssesslessian Infiltrator

For many centuries, the Reticulans employed Ssesslessian assassins and special-forces units as a scalpel to perform covert military actions with surgical precision. Such operations, naturally, require fast and stealthy starships capable of rapid strikes and deep infiltration of enemy territory. The Infiltrator, therefore, is not heavily armed or armored, but sports powerful engines and advanced Reticulan stealth technology, as they were built in Reticulan spaceports – and are now made by the Technate. While it may perform 1-Jump-3, standard operation procedure is to make a Jump-2 transit on the way to the target, then, once the mission is over, use the remaining fuel to perform a Jump-1 at the moment the ship reaches the 100-diameter limit from its target planet. Note that the Infiltrator’s missile rack may carry heavy missiles and even nuclear missiles, for use in surprise attacks on unsuspecting enemy targets.

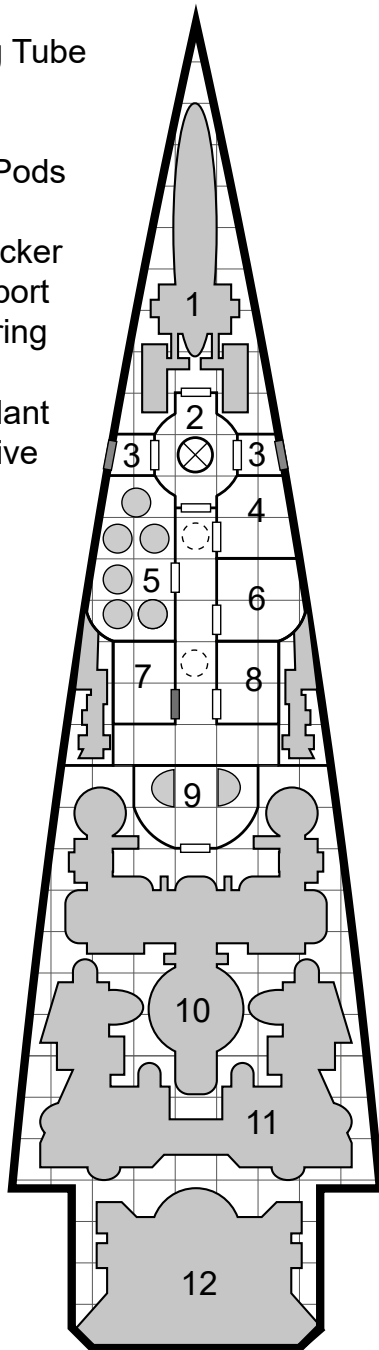
Using a 200-ton hull (4 Hull, 4 Structure), the Ssesslessian Infiltrator mounts jump drive C, maneuver drive E, and power plant E, giving a performance of Jump-3 and 5-G acceleration. Fuel tankage of 80 tons supports the power plant for 4 weeks and 1 jump-3. Adjacent to the bridge is a computer Model 4/fib. Standard software load includes: Evade/2, Fire Control/1, Jump Control/3. The ship is equipped with Highly Advanced sensors (+3 DM). There are 6 staterooms and 10 low berths. The ship has 2 hardpoints and 2 tons allocated for fire control. Installed on the hardpoints are Triple Missile Racks and Triple Beam Laser weapons. A munition magazine of 1 tons allows stowage of 12 missiles. Cargo capacity is 2 tons. The hull is Streamlined with Self-Sealing and Stealth options. Special features include a Ship’s Locker, Fuel Scoops, Fuel Processors (80 tons per day), 10 Escape Pods, a Breaching Tube, 5 Probe Drones, an Armory, and a Shrine. The ship requires a crew of 10: Commander, Cleric, 3 Pilots, Navigator, Engineer, Medic, and 2 Gunners. The ship can carry up to 4 additional passengers at double occupancy and 10 low passengers. The ship costs MCr140.710 and takes 44 weeks to build.



Ssesslessian Infiltrator

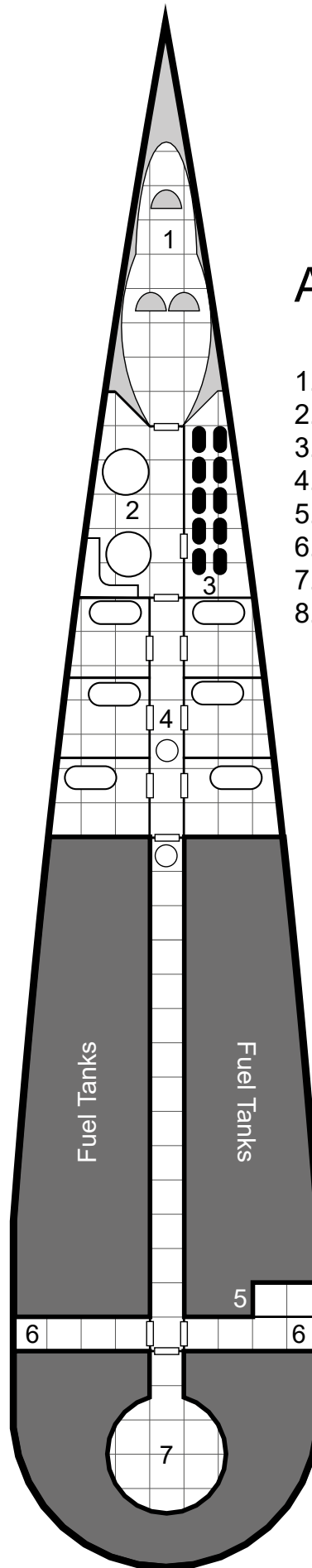
1. Sensors
2. Boarding Tube
3. Air Lock
4. Cargo
5. Escape Pods
6. Armoury
7. Ships Locker
8. Life Support
9. Engineering Control
10. Power Plant
11. Jump Drive
12. M-Drive

B Deck



A Deck

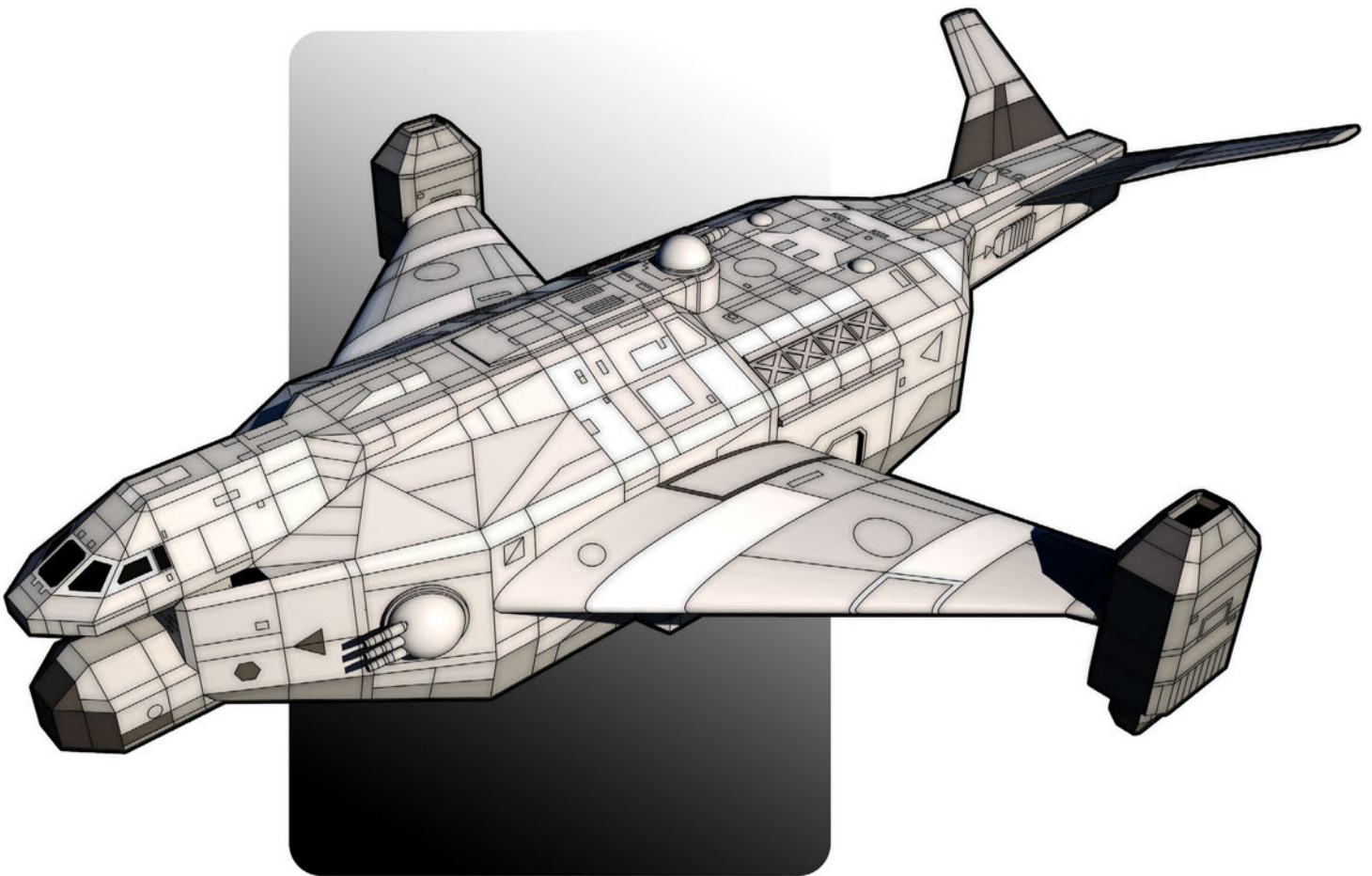
1. Bridge
2. Rest Area
3. Low Berths
4. Staterooms (6)
5. Magazine
6. Probe Drones
7. Turret Access
8. Shrine



300-ton Terran *Shaka*-class Light Military Transport

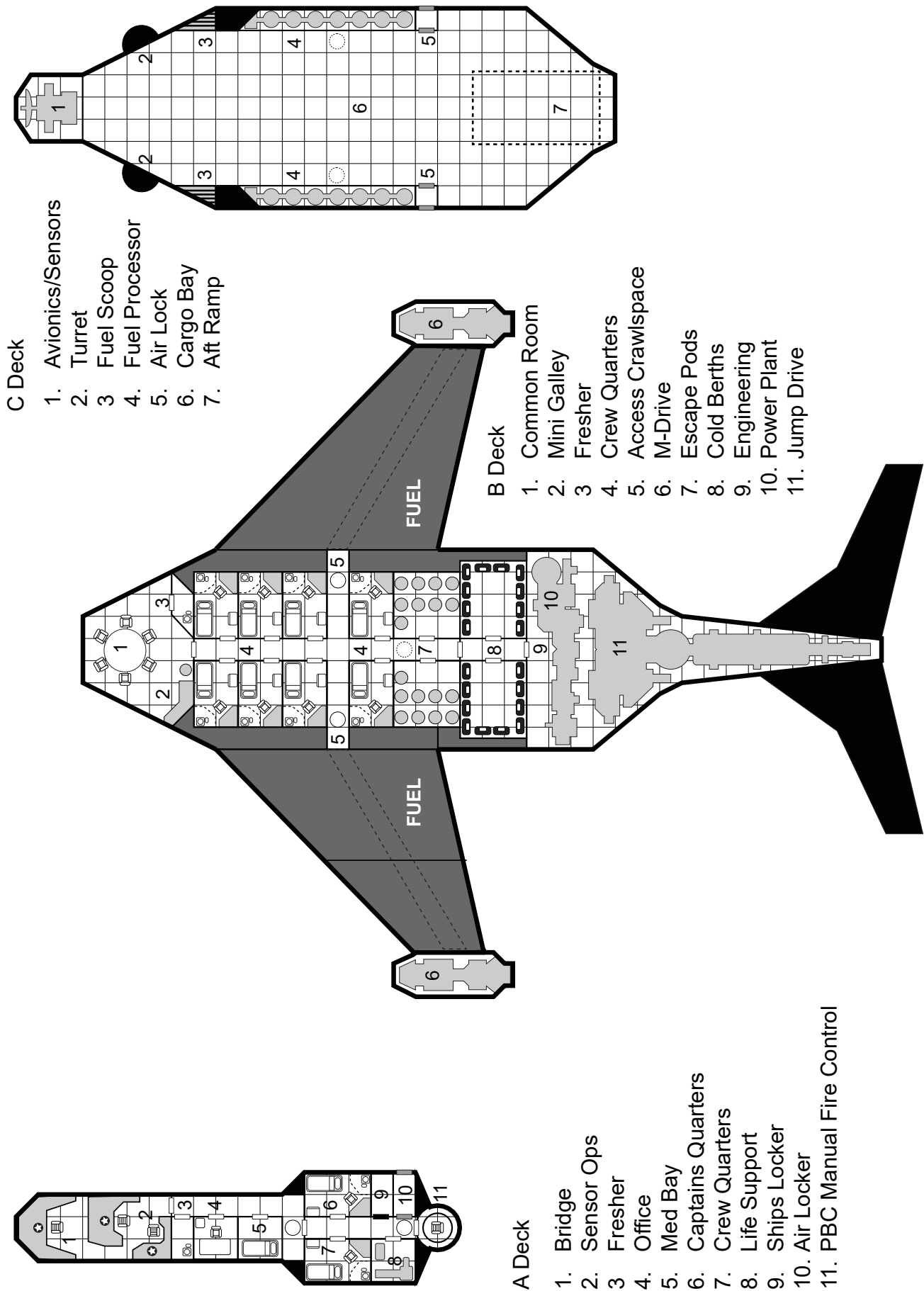
Interstellar military action sometimes requires small, nimble ships to carry out supply missions and “plug the holes” in the larger logistics plan. This is where the *Shaka*-class Light Military Transport comes in. Named after famed historical African warriors and generals, the *Shaka*-class ships carry cargo and troops between systems. While not heavily armed, it can still use its missile racks to provide fire support disembarking troops. A common modification is to install 50 Low Berths at the expense of the cargo hold, allowing the ship to carry a whole platoon (with extras) alongside its equipment.

Using a 300-ton hull (6 Hull, 6 Structure), the *Shaka*-class light military transport mounts jump drive C, maneuver drive C, and power plant C, giving a performance of Jump-2 and 2-G acceleration. Fuel tankage of 72 tons supports the power plant for 4 weeks and 1 jump-2. Adjacent to the bridge is a computer Model 3. Standard software load includes: Evade/1, Fire Control/1, and Jump Control/2. The ship is equipped with Very Advanced sensors (+2 DM). There are 10 staterooms and 20 low berths. The ship has 3 hardpoints and 3 tons allocated for fire control. Installed on the hardpoints are Triple Pulse Lasers, Triple Particle Beams, and Triple Sand Caster-weapons. Cargo capacity is 84 tons. The hull is Streamlined, and is armored with Crystaliron (4 points) with Self-Sealing options. Special features include a Ship's Locker, Fuel Scoops, Fuel Processors (80 tons per day), and 18 Escape Pilots. The ship requires a crew of 7: Pilot/Captain, Navigator/1st Officer, Engineer, Medic and 3 Gunners. The ship can carry up to 6x additional passengers at double occupancy and 20 low passengers. The ship costs MCr99.550 and takes 52 weeks to build.



Shaka Class Light Military Transport

These Stars Are Ours!



These Stars Are Ours!

Decommissioned Shaka-class Transport

After the War, the Terran Navy decommissioned and sold off many of its ships, as part of the general mobilization of the Terran fleets. The *Shaka*-class Transport was decommissioned in large numbers and sold as a light freighter or merchant ship – of course after being stripped of most of its military-grade equipment. While unarmed, it is quite easy to rearm, and it remains as rugged and reliable as ever – and thus is a favorite ship of merchants and explorers prowling the frontier.

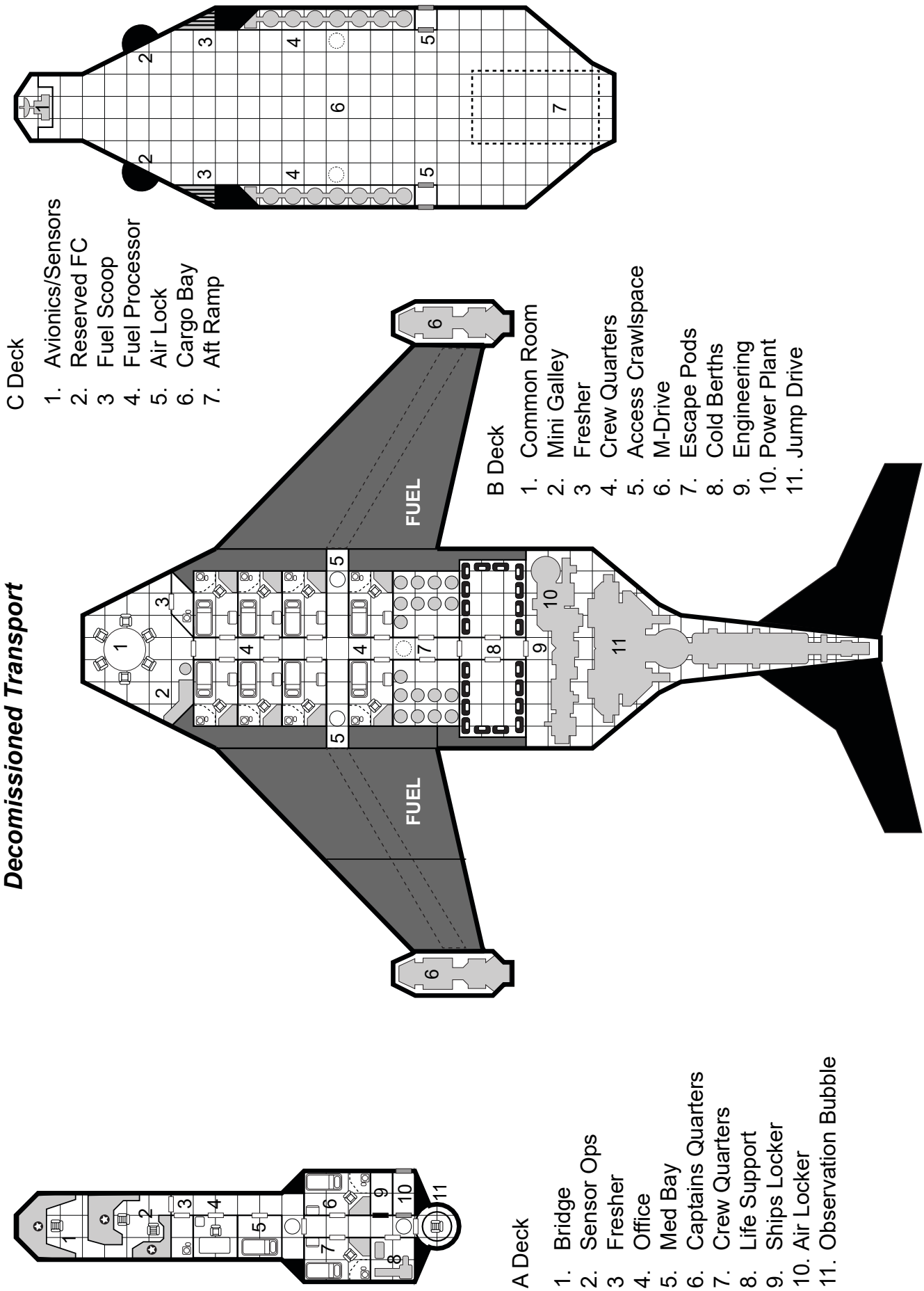
Using a 300-ton hull (6 Hull, 6 Structure), this decommissioned version of the *Shaka*-class light military transport mounts jump drive C, maneuver drive C, and power plant C, giving a performance of Jump-2 and 2-G acceleration. Fuel tankage of 72 tons supports the power plant for 4 weeks and 1 jump-2. Adjacent to the bridge is a computer Model 1/bis. Standard software load includes: Jump Control/2. The ship is equipped with Military sensors (+0 DM). There are 10 staterooms and 20 low berths. The ship has 3 hardpoints and 3 tons allocated for fire control. Cargo capacity is 91 tons. The hull is streamlined, and is armored with crystaliron (4 points) with Self-Sealing option. Special features include a Ship's Locker, integral Fuel Scoops, a Fuel Processor (80 tons per day) and 16 Escape Pods. The ship requires a crew of 4: Pilot, Navigator, Engineer, and Medic. The ship can carry up to 12 additional passengers at double occupancy and 20 low passengers. The ship costs MCr85.630 and takes 52 weeks to build.



Shaka Reliability

The *Shaka*-class Transport is famous for its reliability and ruggedness. While Spartan in its fittings, its engines and other systems can take much of a beating and still work well. Therefore, when a *Shaka* misses its maintenance due date, it does not suffer a penalty or make a system degradation roll in the first month following the missed date. Also, any roll made to jury-rig a damaged system on a *Shaka* enjoys DM +1.

Shaka Class Light Decomissioned Transport



300 ton Typical Zhuzzh Scavenger

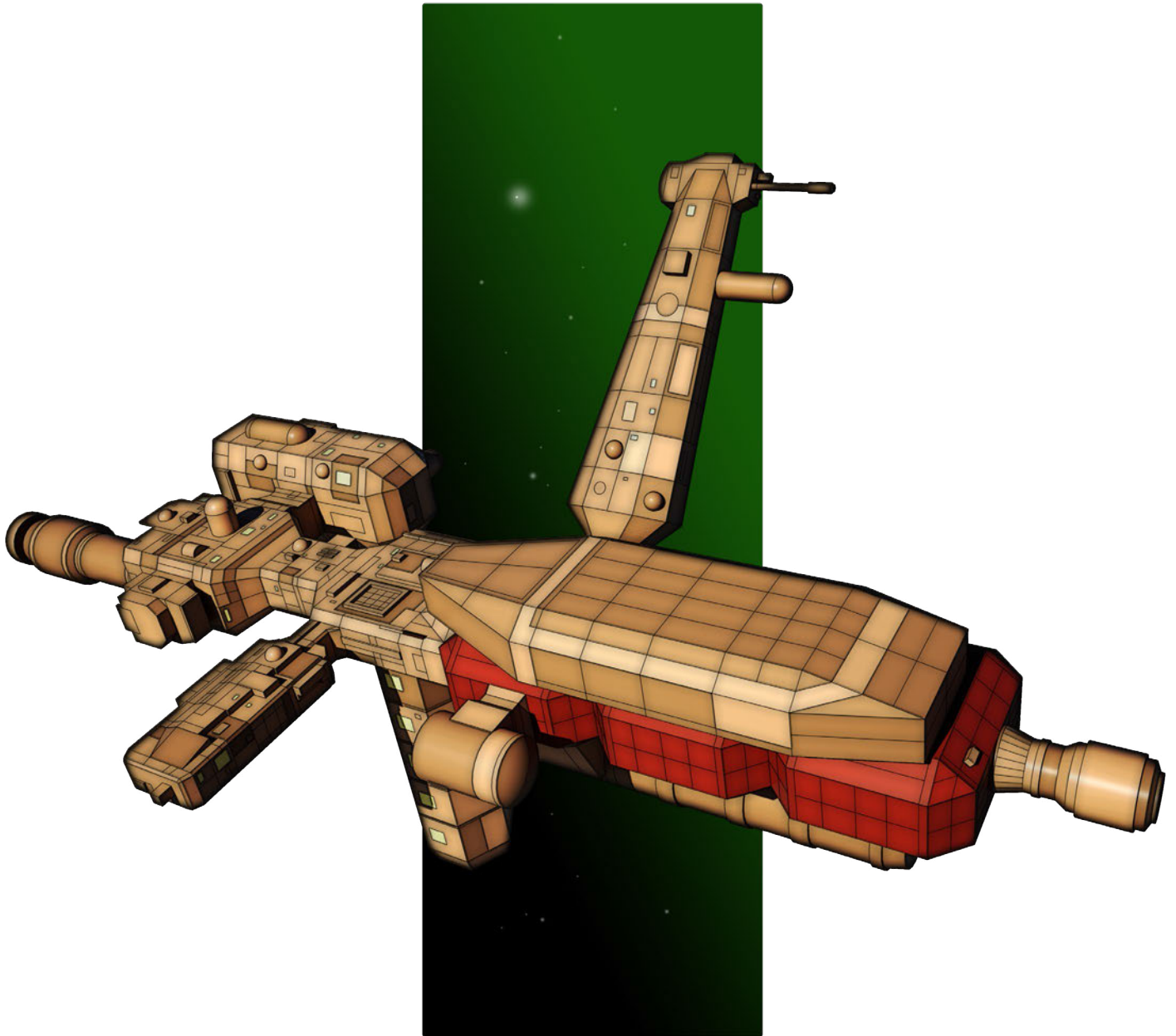
No two Zhuzzh ships are alike: they build custom ships from available material – or, as some would say, available scrap – according to the specific Tech-Priest’s vision. However, most small scavenger ships follow a similar design pattern, combining good armor and engines with a good number of drones, as well as bristling with hidden weapons. Such ships are rarely streamlined and use small craft for atmospheric operations, and this allows them to take any weird and disjointed form dreamed up by the Tech-Priest. Zhuzzh commonly employ cumbersome and dangerous fission plants rather than more modern fusion ones, due to an uneven level of technological advancement and their desire for long-term habitation of their ship in deep space. In some cases, a small Zhuzzh nest would travel in a handful of such ships, engaging in anything from salvage to belting to trade. The scavenger-ship’s versatility is both their strength and its weakness – it is the jack of all trades, but the master of none. Note that when serving as the residence of a part of a Zhuzzh nest, the occupants will typically convert some of the cargo space into additional staterooms. Zhuzzh like crowded spaces and thus always travel in double occupancy.

Using a 300-ton hull (6 Hull, 6 Structure), the Scavenger mounts jump drive C, maneuver drive C, and fission power plant C, giving a performance of Jump-2 and 2-G acceleration. Fuel tankage is divided between 6 tons of fissionable material which supports the power plant for 1 year and 60 tons of hydrogen which supports 1 jump-2. Adjacent to the bridge is a computer Model 2. Standard software load includes: Auto-Repair/1 and Jump Control/2. The ship is equipped with Military sensors (+0 DM). There are 5 staterooms and 20 low berths. The ship has 3 hardpoints and 3 tons allocated for fire control. Installed on the hardpoints are a Single Particle Beam, Triple Beam Lasers and Single Sandcaster weapons. There is a small craft hangar, capable of hanging a Ship’s Boat. Cargo capacity is 54.5 tons. The hull is Standard, and is armored with crystaliron (4 points). Special features include Ship’s Locker, integral Fuel Scoops, Fuel Processors (60 tons per day), 9 Escape Pods, a Breaching Tube, Mining Drones, and Repair Drones. The ship requires a crew of 9: Captain/Pilot, 2 Pilots, Navigator, Engineer, Medic, 3 Gunners. The ship can carry up to 20 low passengers. The ship costs MCr139.310 and takes 52 weeks to build.

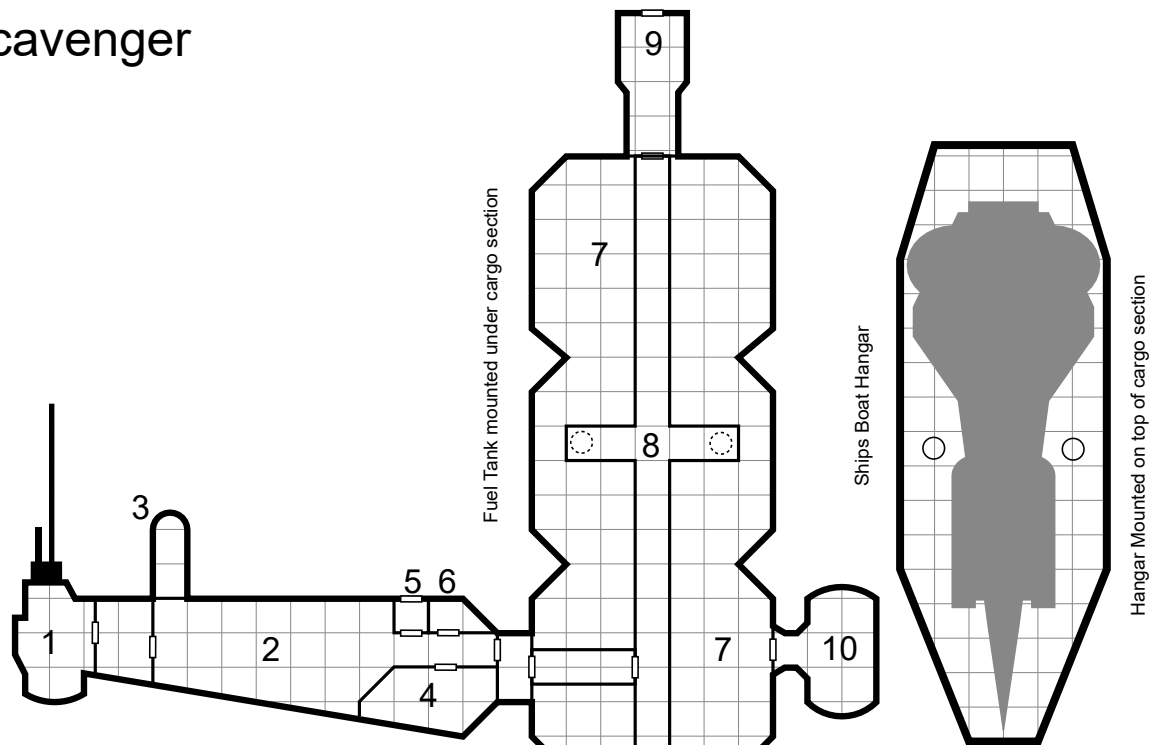
Heap of Scrap

No two Zhuzzh ships are alike; the nest or temporary alliance of nests build each ship from scrap and salvaged materials. Thus, lacking a clean, elegant design, all Zhuzzh ships are clunky and quirky. To represent their “rustbucket” nature in-game, you should treat each Zhuzzh ship, at the point of its construction or purchase, roll 1D3 quirks for it as per the Used Ship rules (p.138). However, as Zhuzzh know such ships inside out and can tinker with it to now end, maintenance costs (p.138) use the ships actual age, regardless its number of quirks, as long as its own Zhuzzh crew carries out its maintenance, regardless of the shipyard’s ownership.

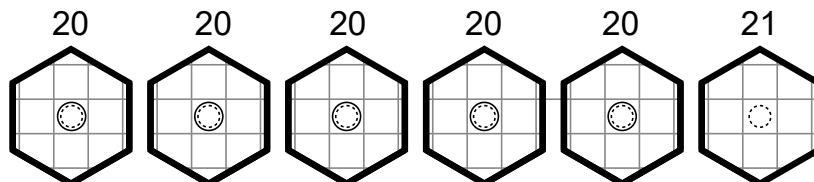
These Stars Are Ours!



Zhuzzh Scavenger



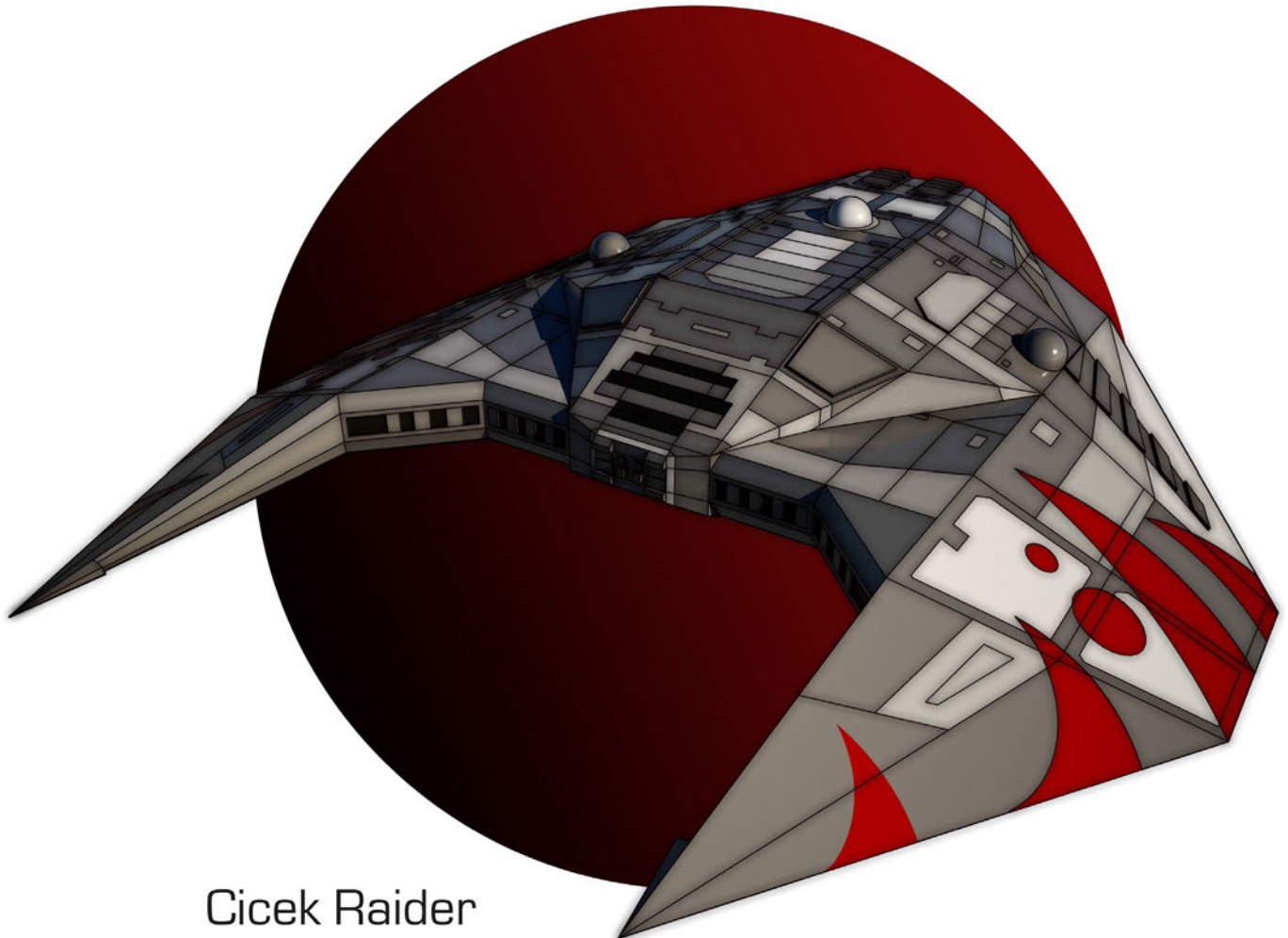
1. Sensors
2. Bridge
3. Probe Drones
4. Ships Computer
5. Airlock
6. Ships Locker
7. Cargo Bay
8. Ships Boat Access
9. Breaching Tube
10. Repair Drones
11. Cold Berths
12. Escape Pods
13. Living Quarters Access
14. Mining Drones
15. Airlock
16. Power Plant
17. Jump Drive
18. M-Drive
19. Engineering Contol
20. Stateroom
21. Rest Room



400 ton Cicek Raider

The Raider is a common Cicek paramilitary ship, used both for direct warfare, “revenue generation” and – in some cases – even genuine trade and exploration. Typical of the Cicek, it is well-designed as a warship, and part of its crew doubles as ship troops for boarding parties and shore raiding parties. During the War, the Cicek produced massive numbers of these ships, and now almost every tribe owns at least one of them, well-prepared for activities both legal and illicit on the frontier. The Raider is a menacing ship, benefitting from the near-sovereignty of the typical tribe to bear arms otherwise more typical of a “proper” military vessel. Note that Cicek like their elbow space and thus never travel in double occupancy when they can avoid it.

Using a 400-ton hull (8 Hull, 8 Structure,), the Raider mounts jump drive F, maneuver drive H, and power plant H, giving a performance of Jump-3 and 4-G acceleration. Fuel tankage of 152 tons supports the power plant for 4 weeks and 1 jump-3. Adjacent to the bridge is a computer Model 4/fib. Standard software load includes: Evade/1, Fire Control/2, and Jump Control/3. The ship is equipped with Very Advanced sensors (+2 DM). There are 12 staterooms and 20 low berths. The ship has 4 hardpoints and 4 tons allocated for fire control. Installed on the hardpoints are Single Particle Beam, Triple Missile Racks, Triple Pulse Lasers and Triple Sandcasters weapons. A munition magazine of 5 tons allows stowage of 60 missiles. Cargo capacity is 43 tons. The hull is Streamlined, and is armored with Crystaliron (4 points) with Self Sealing option. Special features include Ship’s Locker, integral Fuel Scoops, Fuel Processors (160 tons per day), an Armory, 12 Escape Pods, and a Breaching Tube. The ship requires a crew of 12: Captain, 3 Pilots, Navigator, 2 Engineers, Medic and 4 Gunners. The ship can carry up to 20 low passengers. The ship costs MCr200.160 and takes 60 weeks to build.

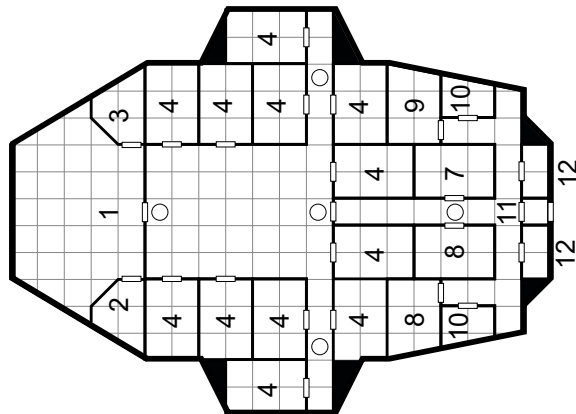


Cicek Raider

Cicek Raider

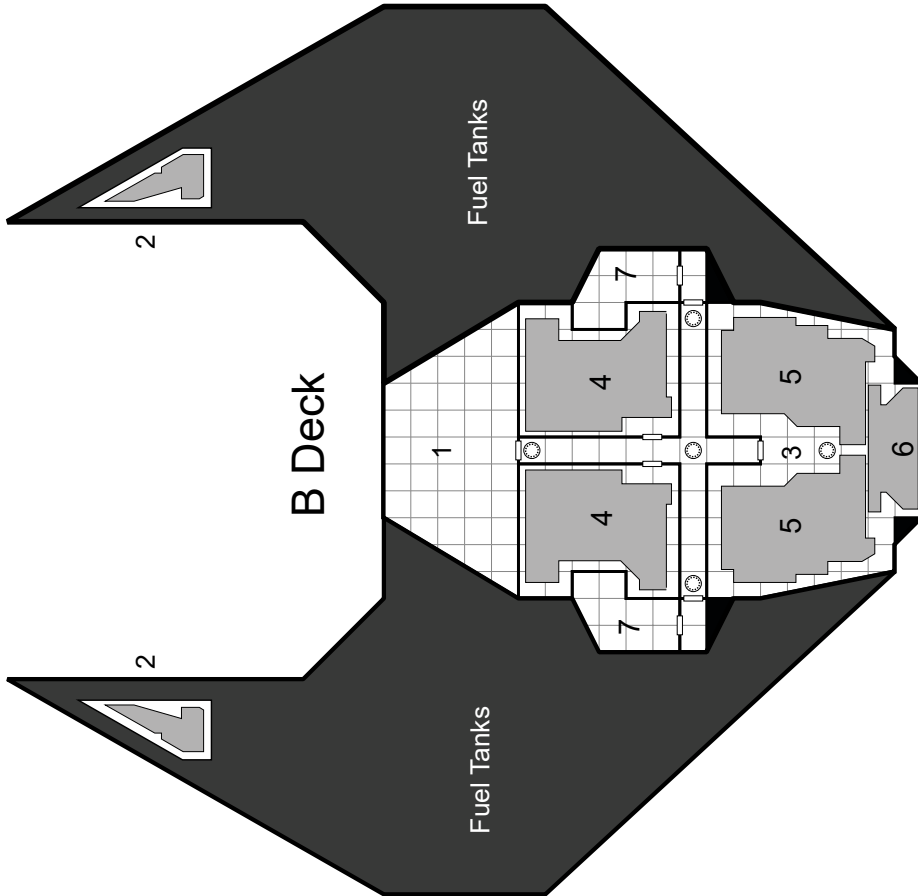
These Stars Are Ours!

A Deck



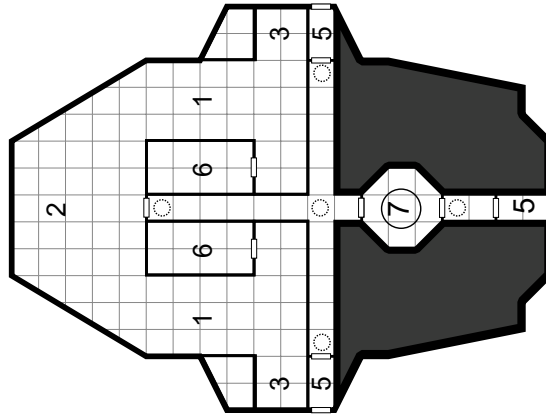
1. Bridge
2. Captains Office
3. Ships Locker
4. Crew Quarters (12)
5. Escape Pods
6. Crew Common Room
7. Wash Room
8. Medical Bay
9. Armory
10. Life Support
11. Airlock
12. Storage

B Deck



1. Cold Berths
2. Sensors
3. Engineering Control
4. Power Plant
5. Jump Drive
6. M-Drive
7. Fuel Processors

C Deck

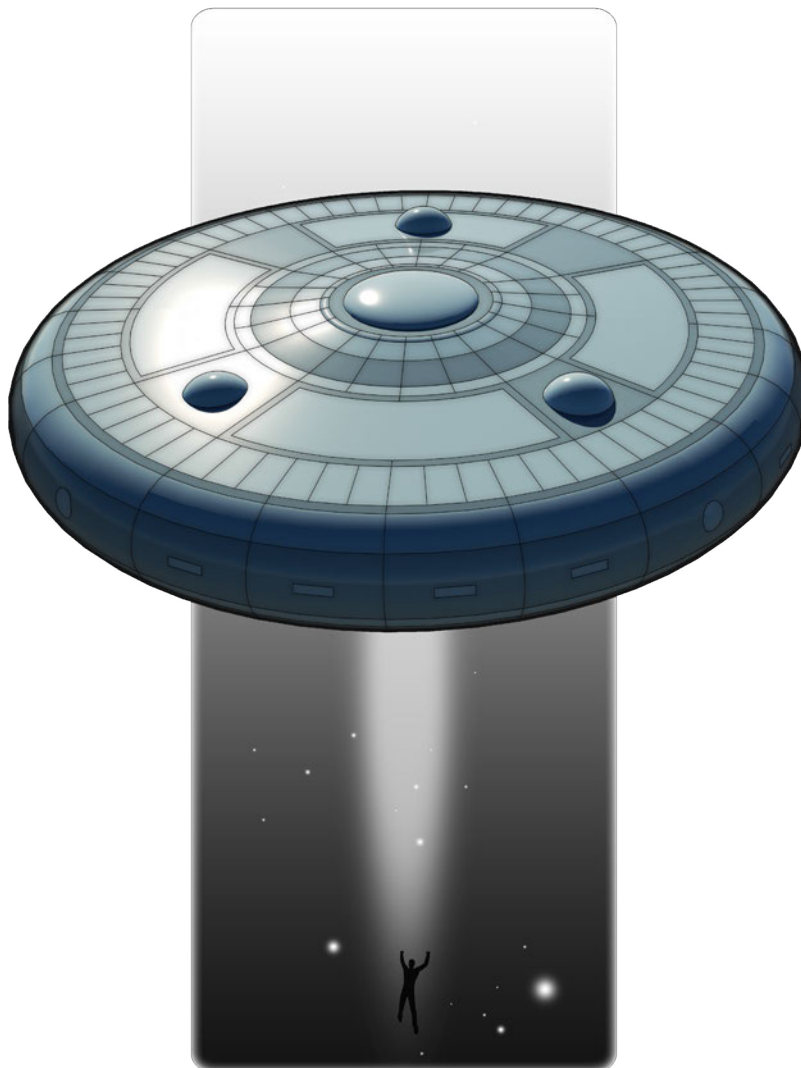


1. Cargo Bay
2. Forward Cargo Ramp
3. Side Cargo Doors
4. Magazine
5. Airlock
6. Fuel Scoops
7. Breaching Tube

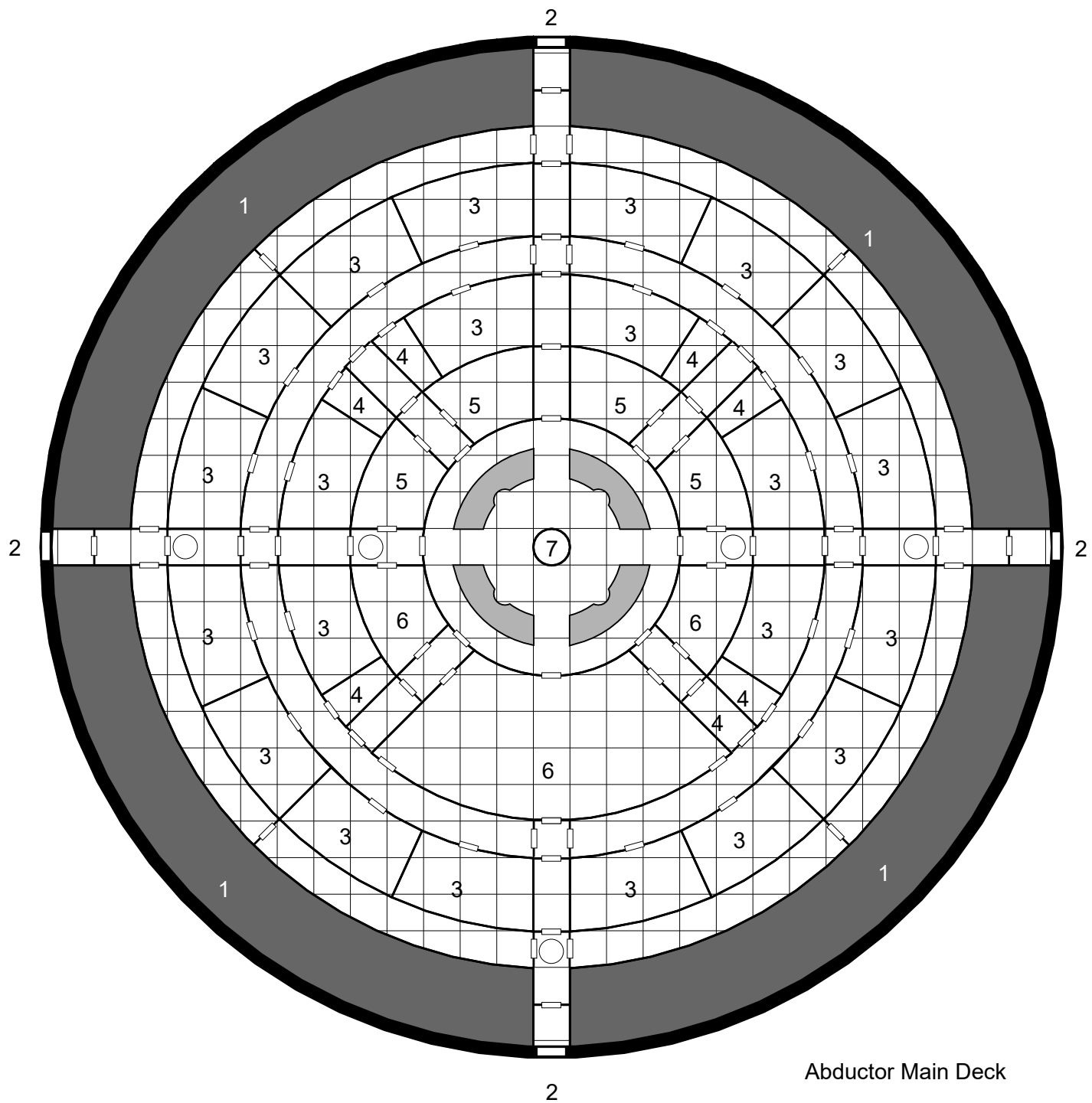
600 ton Reticulan Abductor

Apart from the ubiquitous Saucers, no Reticulan ship is more iconic than the Abductor – the menacing face of Reticulan science. This ship is an extended laboratory vessel, carrying advanced research and medical facilities – its main goal is biological research, typically performed on living subjects from the other sentient species. While it is not a “proper” warship, it does sport powerful weapons, as well as the dreaded Static Pulser used to paralyze enemy ships. What it lacks in armor it more than compensates for in stealth technology, and it does enjoy good speed and a far jump range.

Using a 600-ton hull (12 Hull, 12 Structure,), the Abductor is the menacing face of Reticulan science. It mounts jump drive J, maneuver drive J, and power plant J, giving a performance of Jump-3 and 3-G acceleration. Fuel tankage of 216 tons supports the power plant for 4 weeks and 1 jump-3. Adjacent to the bridge is a computer Model 5. Standard software load includes: Evade/1, Fire Control/1, Jump Control/3, and Simulated Intelligence/1. The ship is equipped with Highly Advanced sensors (+3 DM). There are 22 staterooms and 50 low berths. The ship has 4 hardpoints and 4 tons allocated for fire control. Installed on the hardpoints are Triple Beam Lasers, Triple Pulse Lasers, Triple Sandcasters, and a Single Static Pulser weapons. A munition magazine of 2 tons allows stowage of 40 sand canisters. There is a small craft hangar, capable of hanging a Saucer, normally a Civilian Saucer. Cargo capacity is 11 tons. The hull is Streamlined, with Self Sealing and Stealth options. Special features include Ship's Locker, integral Fuel Scoops, Fuel Processors (220 tons per day), 22 Escape Pods, Breaching Tube, x Laboratories, and a Dedicated Medlab for 14 patients. The ship requires a crew of 22: Captain, 3 Pilots, Navigator, 2 Engineers, 4 Medics, 3 Gunners, and 8 Scientists. The ship can carry up to 20 additional passengers at double occupancy and 50 low passengers. The ship costs MCr373.990 and takes 76 weeks to build.



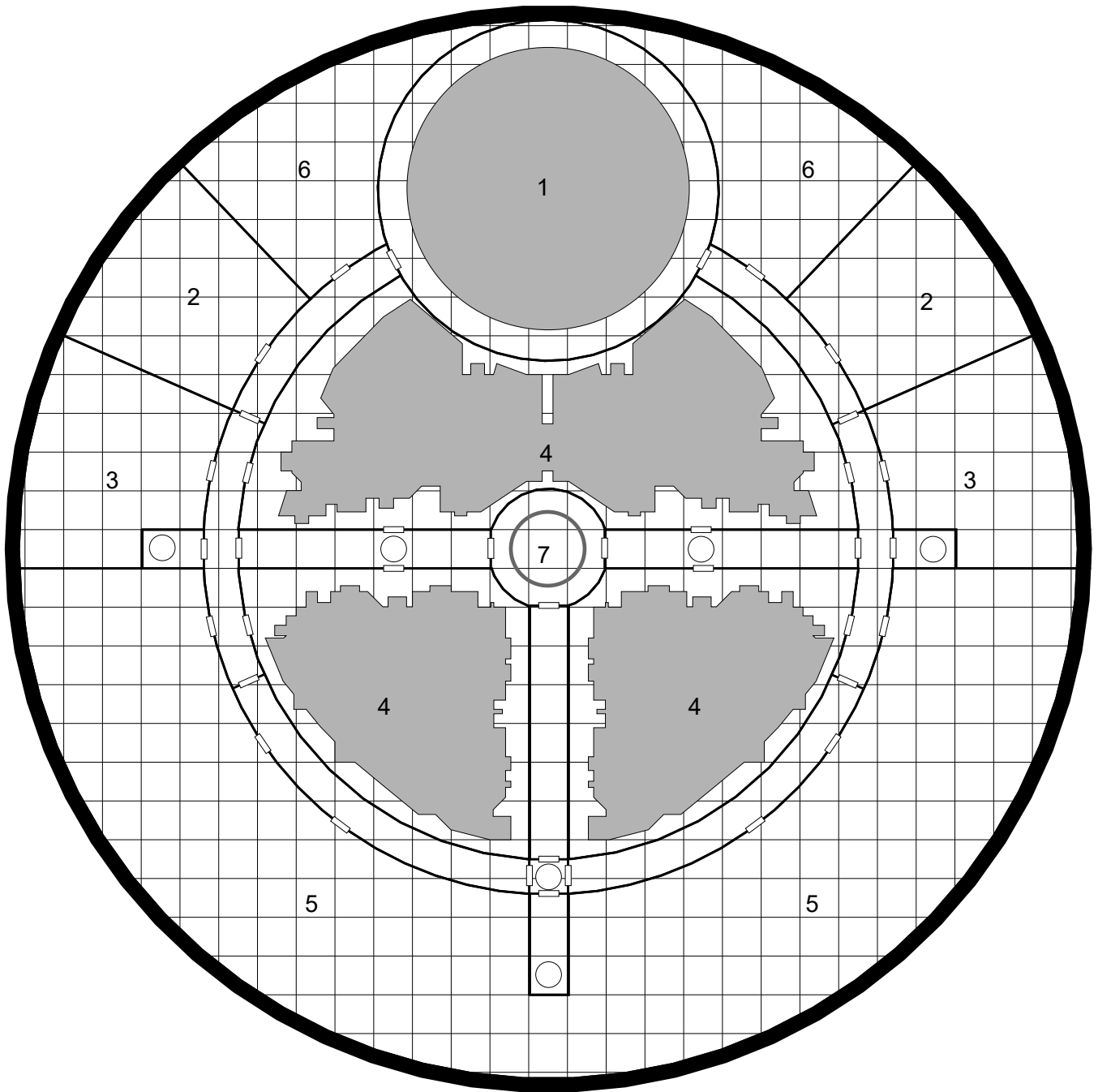
These Stars Are Ours!



Abductor Main Deck

1. Fuel Tanks
2. Airlock
3. Staterooms
4. Storage
5. Crew Rest Areas
6. Medlab
7. Bridge

These Stars Are Ours!



Abductor Lower Deck

1. Saucer Hangar
2. Escape Pods
3. Lower Berths
4. Engineering
5. Laboratories
6. Cargo Space
7. Breaching Tube

Chapter 5 – Terran Borderlands

“The first alien world I visited was Keid and I wasn’t there for sightseeing. I served my term of duty in the 3rd Battalion of the 5th Guard Regiment. We were fresh out of boot camp; we were all raw recruits from Terra. They raised our entire battalion from the ground up. Sure, we had some seasoned sergeants and an old CO, but we ordinary Guardsmen were green recruits. We were the class of ‘56, then straight from school to boot camp as Guard volunteers – hungry for battle in the name of Mother Terra. We did not know what war meant. We were soon to find out.

They brought us out of cryo on the last day of jump and prepared us for combat landing. We did a few training jumps from LEO back home, but this was our first dip into the fire. We suited up, grabbed our gear, and lined up for the pods. No one spoke. No one joked. This was real stuff – jump into the fire and kick the crap out of some grey-skinned bug for Terra and President Singh. Strapping myself into the pod was easy – they drilled us so hard in this in basic that we coulda done it in our sleep. Then I felt the kick, and out I was in space. A few minutes of stargazing and then the fire of atmospheric insertion.

The brass called this Operation Burnt Offering. There was some serious burning, all right, and we were the offering. Planetary defenses opened up on us when we hit the stratosphere in a hail of green plasma fire. There were pods as far as the eye could see – and the unlucky ones got zapped like flies. I saw their blips go out one by one on my HUD – Rusenski, Nkrumah, Segal – guys and gals I had drinks with the night before we boarded the transport – now little more than wisps of smoke in Keid’s atmosphere. I braced myself, prayed hard that I was not the next in line, and then the parachute came up and I was gliding over the Reticulan city-scape.

It was night when we hit the ground. Gravity felt just like home, but the air was dusty and thin. The power was out in the bombed-out city district but two moons shined in the dark skies and we could see the flashes of explosions and laser fire a few streets away from us. The buildings here must have been graceful, tall silvery spires before the War. Now, they lay around like broken fingers jutting from the dusty ground. We regrouped into battle formation and advanced cautiously, wary of Grey snipers.

Our mission was to relieve a battalion of Technocratic rebels pinned down by powerful Imperial fire. Grey politics – I never got their point, but those Techies were on our side, the Imperials deserved a Gauss shot to the head for what they did to us in my parent’s time. It was that simple back then. This is when I first met living, breathing aliens – short “women” with grey skin, no hair, and eyes which were larger than they should be. They were glad to have us there – at least this was what our interpreter told us; you couldn’t judge from the look on their faces what they felt. By the time we got there, the entire battalion numbered less than twenty aliens. We braced with them for the inevitable Imperial attack, which soon came – a wave of warbots and walkers. Thanks God for our Plasmas and Tac missiles – they got what was coming for them.

That was how I first visited an alien world. It was strange, I got a laser blast to my knee, but I came back. Six of my friends – my best buddies from boot camp – remained there forever, probably in one of the mass graves; we did recover the bodies of thirteen more from my company and sent them for burial with full honors on the Motherworld. Now the war is over and Shengot us drummed out when he merged the Guard with the damned Naval Infantry bubbleheads. They didn’t need that many Guardsman to man the Marine squads, so here I am, mustered out with a free Middle Pass from ol’ Singh for my service. Now I’m going to see the universe – and this time not through a Gauss Rifle’s recon scope.”

- Former Guardsman First Class Boris Saunders, age 22, Svarog, December 21, 2259

Reticulan space stretches many parsecs to the Rimward of Terra, and Terran space expands further Coreward. This vast universe holds boundless opportunities for adventure and drama under the light of many distant stars. The greatest drama, however, the greatest conflict and action, goes in the narrow band called the Terran Borderlands. There, the spheres of influence of the United Terran Republic, the Reticulans, the Cicek, and the Ssesslessians intersect. There, political machinations, covert operations, and still-opened war-wounds simmer as these interstellar powers jockey for dominance in the Post-War universe.

This chapter details the Terran Borderlands as they exist two years after the end of the War. In addition to a general overview of known space, as well as an overall description of the Terran Borderlands, we describe in detail each of the sixty-four worlds of this region, and provide a short Patron encounter for every world, allowing the Referee to easily integrate these worlds into their campaign.

An Introduction to Astrography

There are several ways to measure the distance between stars and describe directions in the galaxy. The 23rd century Terrans follow the terminology used by the Reticulan empire for various legacy reasons (see p.55). The UTR measures distance between stars in **Parsecs** (3.26 light year each) and uses a direction system based on the star's relative location to the galactic core and spin direction. The direction towards the galactic core is called **Coreward**; the direction towards the galactic rim is called **Rimward**; in the direction of the galaxy's spin is called **Spinward**; and the direction opposite to it is called **Trailing**. For example, Chiron is two parsecs to the Spinward of Terra, while Sirius is three parsecs to the Rimward of Terra.

The Reticulan Empire divided the space it ruled – called the Reticulan **Sector** - into **Subsectors**. Each Subsector is ten parsecs from Coreward to Rimward and eight parsecs from Spinward to Trailing; why the Reticulans didn't use a square grid has been lost in history. The Terran Borderlands map included in this book is equivalent to two Subsectors in size, though they do not correspond directly with the conventional Reticulan subsectors.

Flat Star-Maps

Real space is, obviously, three-dimensional – and so is the arrangement of stars in the galaxy. However, when sitting around a kitchen table with one or more trays of pizza, dice, and a good number of like-minded friends, many people prefer to avoid dealing with the complex calculations involved in three-dimensional space travel and just get on with interstellar adventures. Therefore, just as the Cepheus Engine assumes, **These Stars Are Ours!** Uses abstracted two-dimensional star maps neatly divided into one-parsec hexagons. Similarly, this book rounds the highly variable distances in three-dimensional interstellar space into the nearest parsec, all for the ease of play.

Star Spectral Class

The science of astronomy classifies most stars using the letters *O*, *B*, *A*, *F*, *G*, *K* and *M*, a sequence from the hottest (*O*-type) to the coolest (*M*-type). Each letter class is then subdivided using a numeric digit with *O* being the hottest and *9* being the coolest. For example, A8, A9, F0, F1 form a sequence from hotter to cooler. The sequence has been expanded with classes for other stars and star-like objects that do not fit into the classical system, such as brown dwarfs and white dwarfs.

In this system, a size classification is added to the spectral class using Roman numerals. Size class *I* star are super-giants, class *II* stars are bright giants, class *III* stars for regular giants, class *IV* for sub-giants, class *V* for main-sequence stars (by far the most common size), class *VI* for sub-dwarfs. For example, Sol is a warm, yellow main sequence star and is classified as a G2V star.

In addition to this general classification system, we have used the designation *BD* for Brown Dwarfs that would be classified as *L*, *T* or *Y* stars. We have also used the designation *WD* for White Dwarfs, the remnants of stars that have completed their fusion burning cycles and are now slowly fading away. Both *BD* and *WD* stars have several different sub-classifications, but the differences, while very important to astronomers, don't make much of a difference in typical science-fiction gameplay, so we have combined them into these simpler classifications for convenience.

Many stars will also have various designators added to them if they have unusual features, such as emission stars, variable stars etc. We have eliminated all such designators from the star table, again for simplicity and ease of play.

Since each star on the list, except for the RISC stars, is a real star, a simple internet search on the star's name will produce a large amount of astronomical data that a Referee can use, if desired. Stars that were added for play purposes are designated as RISC (Revised Imperial Star Catalog – the Reticulan Empire's star list) and are all low-mass stars.

These Stars Are Ours!

World Temperature

This book adds Temperatures to all listed Main Worlds. Therefore, we provide below the rules for generating a world's temperature and a brief description of the included temperatures. A world's surface temperature is primarily dependent on its distance from the star, atmospheric density and composition, as well as its star's spectral type. The habitable zone is the area around a star that is most conducive to the development of life, specifically Earth-like life. The main factor in the development of life is the ability for liquid water to exist on the surface.

If the Referee wishes to determine the average surface temperature of a world, the following procedure can be used. It is assumed that the normal UWP has already been determined.

Roll 2D6 for the world's temperature; for worlds with ATM 4-9, use the Prime column to determine the results, for all other atmospheres, use the Random column to determine results:

2d6			Average	
Random	Prime	Type	Temperature	Description
1-		Cryonic	-200°C or less	Water is just another type of rock. Very little chance of sub-surface oceans. Ice deposits common on the surface
2		Cryonic	-200°C or less	
3		Frozen	-200°C to -51°C	No liquid water on surface, very dry atmosphere. Possible sub-surface oceans
4	2-3	Cold	-50°C to 0°C	Icy world. Large glaciers and extensive ice caps, few clouds
5	4	Cold	-50°C to 0°C	
6	5-6	Temperate	0°C to 30°C	Earth-like. Liquid and vaporized water common. Moderate ice caps.
7	7	Temperate	0°C to 30°C	
8	8-9	Temperate	0°C to 30°C	
9	10	Hot	31°C to 80°C	Most water in the form of clouds, little surface water, possible sub-surface oceans, small or no ice caps
10	11-12	Hot	31°C to 80°C	
11		Boiling	81°C to 200°C	No surface water, no clouds, minimal ice caps. Possible sub-surface oceans
12		Boiling	81°C to 200°C	
13+		Torrid	200°C or more	No water present in any form.

DMs:

ATM 0-1: +0 DM

ATM 2-3: -2 DM

HYD 0-2: +1 DM

ATM A, D, F: +2 DM

ATM B, C: +4

Descriptions:

Cryonic: Cryonic worlds are those worlds far outside the habitable zone. Temperatures are so low that many common gasses have frozen and are found on the surface. Most atmospheres are composed of Nitrogen and Methane. In extreme cases, even these gasses will appear as liquids or solids on the surface. Life on these types of worlds is extremely rare and if it exists would not be Earth-like.

Frozen: Frozen worlds are outside the habitable zone, but if conditions are right, large deposits of liquid water can exist under the surface, protected from the cold by kilometers of ice. Most of these types of worlds have significant ice deposits on the surface and may be completely covered with an icy layer. Life on these worlds may exist in primitive forms in the subsurface oceans.

Jump drive gravity requirements

In this setting, jump drives require a gravity well – a large enough mass – on each end of the jump. While jumping too “deep” inside of a gravity well is dangerous, jumping too far from its center of mass is impossible. Starships may only activate their jump drives between 100 and 10,000 diameters from a planetary (Size 1 or larger) or stellar body. Jump drives cannot jump into deep interstellar space, represented by empty hexes on the starmap; the navigator must choose an occupied hex, symbolizing a star system with enough mass to allow a jump. A misjump deposits a starship in the closest occupied hex to its rolled destination.

Cold: Cold worlds are at the outer edge of the habitable zone. Moderate temperatures may exist near the equator and this is where any surface water will exist, but most of the world is always below the freezing point of water. CO₂ may freeze out near the poles. Large liquid water deposits may exist below the surface. Life is quite possible on these types of worlds.

Temperate: The world is near the middle of the habitable zone or has enough greenhouse gasses to make it warmer than expected. Liquid water can exist at almost any latitude, but the poles are usually covered with moderate sized ice caps. Life is common on these types of worlds.

Hot: The world is either near the inner edge of the habitable zone or has greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere that maintain the higher temperature. Ice caps are very small and liquid water will not normally exist near the equator. Life is common on these types of worlds, but usually primitive.

Boiling: The world is located inside the habitable zone or has greenhouse gasses that have raised the temperature such that liquid water cannot exist on the surface. Ice caps may exist near the poles, in deep, shadowed valleys or craters, but nowhere else. Liquid water may exist in small deposits under the surface. Life on these types of worlds is very unlikely.

Torrid: The world is located well inside the habitable zone or greenhouse gasses have created an unbearable condition on the surface. If the world has any atmosphere at all, there will be no water anywhere. If the world is airless, then it is possible that very small deposits of ice may exist at the poles in deep, shadowed craters, but even then, the amount of water will be minimal. Life on these worlds is almost impossible except for floating life in the upper atmosphere.

Vacuum: Worlds with ATM 0 and 1 deserve special attention when it comes to temperature. Although the world will still have an average surface temperature, due to the lack of an atmosphere, there will be dramatic swings in temperature between day and night. Shadowed areas can be significantly colder than the lighted area right next to it. In general, the thinner the atmosphere, the more wildly the temperatures will change between day and night and between the equator and the poles. Worlds with very thick atmospheres can have very little variation in surface temperature.

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Reading Worlds Entries

This chapter describes the 64 worlds included in the Terran Borderlands region. The overview table uses the shorthand Reticulan coding scheme, which we will explain below. Most systems have one important world, called the “mainworld”, as well as several lesser colonies on other planets, bodies, and even as space stations. The entries we provide here describe the mainworld, as the population on secondary colonies is typically negligible in comparison to it. This is how a world entry looks like:

Name	Hex	UWP	BS	G	Trade	Temp	AL	Star	Stellar Data
Asura	0908	C798788-D	SR	G	Ag Ht	Temp	Re	YV Canis Minoris	M4V

The name is the world’s name and the Hex is its hexagon number on the Terran Borderlands starmap. The “UWP” - Universal World Profile – is a shorthand coded way to describe a world, as per standard Reticulan survey protocol – in order, it describes the world’s starport class, size, atmosphere type, hydrographic percentage, population, government, law level – and technological level. The “BS” column gives the code for various bases present on the world. The “G” column notes the existence of gas giants in the system. The trade codes correspond to the Cepheus Engine trading rules, describing the world’s general economic outlook (*CE174*). The Temp column shows the world general temperature class, described above. “AL” stands for allegiance – noting which polity or empire the world belongs to. The star column shows which star the world orbits. Finally, the Stellar Data shows the star’s spectral type and, if present, the existence of other stars in the system.

The example given above shows a name called “Asura”, located in hexagon 0908 of the starmap. It has a class C starport; has a surface gravity of approximately 0.9 Gs, possesses a thick tainted atmosphere, and water covers 80% of its surface; it has a population of several tens of millions of inhabitants, a Civil Service Bureaucracy government, and a restrictive law level of 8. It has a Scout base and a Research Station. The system has gas giants present. This is a High-Tech Agricultural world. Surface temperature is Temperate. The world belongs to the Reticulan Empire. It orbits the star YV Canis Minoris, which is a M4V red dwarf.



Overview of Known Space

The galaxy is vast and we have visited a tiny and insignificant area out of this great disk of stars. Even the Reticulan Empire – the greatest interstellar power known to us – is a speck in size compared to the galaxy. In this space, however, our history unfolds. The Reticulans once designated their space as a “Sector”, forty parsecs from Coreward to Rimward and thirty parsecs from Spinward to Trailing. They divided it into sixteen “Subsectors”. They eventually grew and expanded out of this initial Sector and subjugated four species – including the Terrans – to serve as their client-states. Known space, in its modern form, stretches across approximately four Sectors, that is a radius of approximately thirty to forty parsecs from Zeta 2 Reticuli, though they do not directly correspond to the Sectors of official Reticulan astrography. The approximate center of known space is Zeta 2 Reticuli – the Reticulan homestar, a dozen parsecs to the Rimward-Trailing from Sol. It is somewhat to the Coreward and the Spinward from the astrographical center of the Reticulan Empire. The Empire itself fills nine Subsectors, while its client species, as well as the now-independent Terrans and Cicek, expand known space by a subsector or two outward. At its height, the Empire filled a Sector of space – a colossal achievement of interstellar political organization. Today, however, the Terrans and Cicek to the Coreward-Spinward and the Chiwak to the Rimward did bite off significant parts of Imperial space. The Reticulan Empire has two open frontiers, one to the Coreward-Trailing and one to the Rimward-Trailing. Their expansion in these directions is slow, however, due to the administrative challenges of maintaining such a massive empire.

To the Rimward of the Empire are the Chiwak – nemeses of the Reticulans from time immemorial. Their Holy Dominion is usually smaller than the Reticulan Empire, approximately four subsectors in size. They sometimes manage to temporarily conquer up to two more subsectors inside Reticulan space, only to be repulsed several years later by the Reticulan counter-attack. While their Reticulan rivals eclipse the Chiwak economically, they are a military power-house built on their strong predatory instincts and militantly religious society. To the Rimward and Spinward of Chiwak space there is an open frontier, but the Chiwak seem to be more interested in conquering Reticulan worlds than expanding into the unknown.

Spinward from the Reticulans lies Cicek space – a collection of autonomous worlds and a countless number of tribes loosely organized under the umbrella of the Cicek Confederation. They control approximately two subsectors of space, with a wide-open Spinward frontier to which they are now expanding after the peace treaty restricted raiding and expanding into Reticulan space.

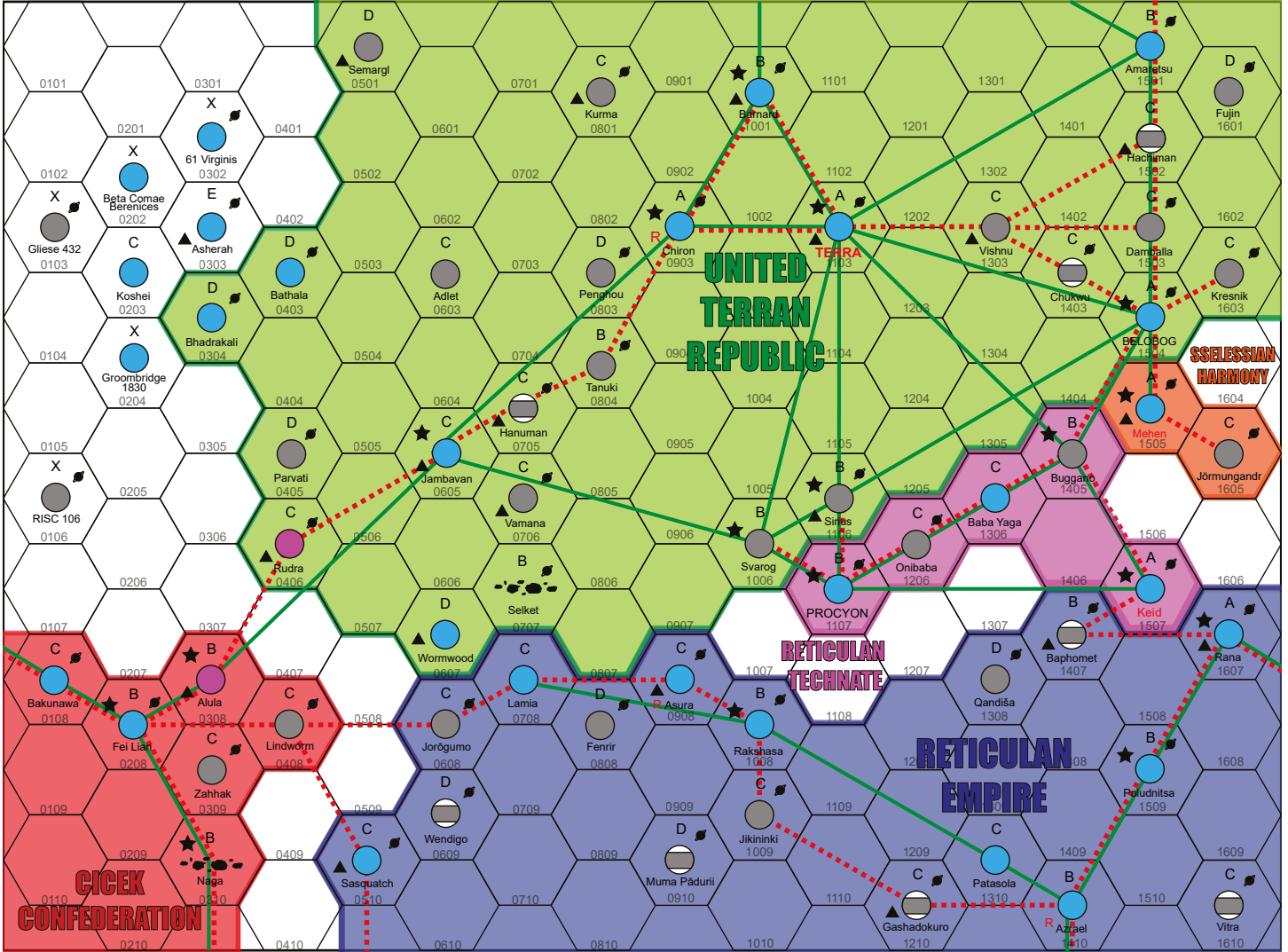
The United Terran Republic lies to the Coreward-Trailing of Cicek space and to the Coreward-Spinward of Reticulan Imperial territory. The human client-state of the Reticulan Empire, the Earth Federal Administration, controlled approximately one subsector of space. The independent UTR expanded in all directions to control over two subsectors – part of it at the expense of Reticulan stars. The Terrans have open frontiers to the Spinward and Coreward, and a semi-open frontier to their Trailing, bordering the Ssesslessian and Reticulan frontiers of that area. Terra has two client-states of its own – the Reticulan Technate and the Ssesslessian Harmony – both located on its border with the Reticulan Empire. The Technate controls five worlds and the Harmony merely two.

The Fanja Kanja and the Klax each control a subsector of space, both to the Trailing of Reticulan space. Both species remained clients of the Reticulan Empire despite the War, as Terra gave up its dreams of interstellar liberation and a multi-species interstellar republic. The Fanja Kanja have frontiers to their Coreward and Trailing, and the Klax to their Rimward and Trailing. The Fanja Kanja are expanding at a steady pace into unexplored space, driven by curiosity rather than any territorial expansionist drive. The Klax expand very little, but do slowly explore their frontiers and settle a few border worlds.

It is extremely likely that many more sentient species reside further outside this sphere of explored space, but none has been contacted so far. The frontiers are widely open; exploration awaits. However, the great powers of astropolitics, such as the Reticulans, Cicek, Chiwak, and of course the Terrans, are interested in their struggle for ascendancy at least as much as in surveying and settling new worlds.

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A standard system for identifying worlds within a star system was developed in the early 21st Century on Earth, later modified by the Reticulan occupation, and now in use again after the War. Where stars have a constellation name or a name from an old Earth star catalog (such as the Gliese catalog), those names are used for the stars. If multiple stars exist in the system, they are identified by capital letters, with the brightest star being A and going onward to the dimmest. Planets are identified by a small letter, starting with an 'a' for the world closest to the star and moving outward. While this system appears simple, it gets quite complex in multi-star systems with worlds orbiting multiple stars. Luckily, almost every inhabited world is quickly named by its inhabitants and those names are used whenever possible. For Example Alpha Centauri C b is called "Chiron" and orbits the dimmest star in the triple-star system.



Terran Borderlands

The Terran Borderlands lie at the intersection of three interstellar powers – the Reticular Empire, the Cicek Confederation, and the United Terran Republic – and contains the two Terran client-states, the Reticular Technate and the Ssesslessian Harmony. Twenty-eight years ago, the Reticular Empire dominated this space and held both Terrans and most Cicek as its vassals and clients. The Terran Liberation War, fought almost exclusively in the Terran Borderlands, broke the Reticular yoke and made Terra a rising star in the astropolitical landscape.

The dominant astrographical features of the Terran Borderlands are the Terran Main, the Eridani Main, and the Beta Canum Cluster. The largest among these is the Solar Main – a string of stars at one-parsec distance from each other, stretching from Sasquatch and Muma Pădurii to the Rimward to beyond the Terran frontier to the Coreward. Even simple starships capable of mere Jump-1 travel can traverse this Main with ease, making it an important inroad into Terran space from Reticulan Imperial stars. Sol itself connects to the Solar Main via the

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extremely dim red dwarf RISC 666 (now called Hades) which was only discovered after the Reticulan conquest of Terra, which connects it to the Alpha Centauri system (now Chiron) and to Barnard's Star. The Eridani Main lies to the Trailing from Sol and reaches from Procyon and Sirius to the far Coreward end of Terran space. Both Mains saw significant fighting during the Terran Liberation War due to their crucial strategic importance. Finally, the Beta Canum cluster lies on the Spinward edge of Terran space and contains several promising worlds, but so far, the Terrans have only colonized two of them.

The Borderlands are a hotspot of interstellar politics, located on the border between five polities, two years after the monstrous War. Opportunity for adventure, heroism, villainy, exploration, and profit abound. For the newly demobilized Terran soldier, the now-unemployed Cicek mercenary, the enterprising Reticulan Technocrat, the renegade Ssesslessian, or the inquisitive Imperial Reticulan noble-scientist – the stars are wide open.

Cicek Confederation

Cicek space lies on the Spinward-Rimward corner of the Borderlands. Until recently a frontier region, these Cicek stars saw massive development during the War. The risky trade and supply route from Terra to the Cicek core worlds along the Solar Main – called the Cicek Run – went through this region and brought with it rapid development. Even today, the Cicek borderlands worlds enjoy a “boomtown” economy, as several tribes have migrated there to exploit the virgin rocks for resources and settle the fertile soil of the local “capital” of Fei Lian. As usual for Cicek, the typical starport in this region is a free port open to all kinds of business, legitimate or otherwise, with few (if any) questions asked.

Alula BAA3770-C, Frozen (Alula Borealis g, K3III, Frozen, Cicek Confederation)

Alula is a recent Cicek colony, first settled in 2238 as a fortified waystation for the “Cicek Run”. By the mid-2240's it grew into a small border fortress and naval refueling station, though the Cicek did not establish a proper naval base there but rather a smaller “scout” base. Initially deemed unappealing for settlements, the discovery of highly valuable complex compounds in Alula's cryonic carbohydrate oceans drew enterprising Cicek tribes to harvest the chemicals and export them both to Cicek and Terran space. The world also remains an important spot on the Terra-Cicek trade route, though secondary in its importance to the more habitable Fei Lian. Typical for the Cicek, no real law exists beyond the tribal level and there are no restrictions on goods or armament. The Nine Fingers tribe operates the starport and stays neutral in the otherwise cutthroat – sometimes literally so – competition between the four other local Cicek tribes.

Bakunawa C548470-A, Cold (20 Leonis Minoris Ad, G3V/MV, Cold, Cicek Confederation)

The cold and wet world of Bakuwana is not a pleasant place to live in, but serves as a stopover on the Cicek trade-route from Fei Lian to the Spinward. Settled in 2241 as a waystation, its moderate mineral wealth drew three small Cicek tribes now engaged in prospecting and early mining, as well as operating the starport and its attendant businesses. The tribes often quarrel over control of the profitable business of starport operations. Thus, policing in this system is ineffective and opportunistic piracy is a constant risk, prompting passing Cicek merchants to arm themselves to their teeth to deter would-be corsairs. Rumor also has it that prospectors have uncovered Precursor ruins in deep, half-flooded cavern systems near the equator, drawing fortune-seekers and even a small presence of Zhuzzh in the system. The latter also engage in trading and in occasional piracy and clash with competing Cicek pirates.

Fei Lian B588740-D, Temperate (Pi1 Ursae Majoris d, G1V, Cicek Confederation)

Adorned by breathtaking vistas of tall cliffs and hanging forests, Fei Lian is a world of enormous natural beauty. It is also home to the “Fei Lian Dragons” – large flying reptilian predators with majestic leathery wings and the ability to spit venom. This fact has drawn Cicek hunters to this world in the late 22nd century, following the initial survey. The fertile soil and pleasant climate soon drew Cicek farmers as well. During the War, Fei Lian served as the regional “capital” of Cicek space and the major Cicek Run transit hub, bringing an influx of commerce which now continues in peacetime trade with the Terrans. The ruling elected council of tribal matriarchs does not

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intervene in economic matters and allows enterprising males to see commercial glory to their hearts' content. Rich, technologically advanced, and lawless, Fei Lian is a free-for-all market where one can find any imaginable good regardless of its legality in Terran or Reticulan space

Lindworm C100600-A, Temperate (Gliese 357 g, K0V WD, Cicek Confederation)

Cicek forces took Lindworm – a Reticulan listening post – in 2245 and soon used this tiny rock as a staging post for raids deeper into Imperial space. The raiders stayed even as the War moved to the Trailing and finally ended. Now, this is a stopover on the Reticulan-Cicek trade route and a convenient port for Cicek pirates and smugglers. While the regular traffic to and from Reticulan space carries enough weapons to deter all but the foolhardiest pirates, the world – with its utter lack of government and convenient location – is a known harbor for pirates and raiders preying on the surrounding Reticulan, Cicek, and Terran worlds. The old Reticulan listening post remains unused, looted long ago by the Cicek, but judging from the standard Reticulan modus operandi, there should be additional, still untouched, sites hidden around Lindworm.

Naga B000570-D, Temperate (RISC 310 c, K1V, Cicek Confederation)

Naga's location made it an important wartime staging ground for attacking the Spinward flank of Reticulan space. Thus, the Cicek expanded the local waystation into a fully-fledged naval base shared by multiple tribes. The base remains, as well as the arguably salvageable wreckage left from two major Reticulan attacks on the system, but the system's true importance is now economic. Cicek prospectors discovered rich deposits of radioactives and rare earths in Naga's three asteroid belts in 2247, leading to a "gold rush" of belters seeking fortune and glory in the belt. This created an entire "ecosystem" surrounding the mining operations, from commercial stations offering services and entertainment for the miners to a burgeoning business of armed claim-jumping.

Zahak C500300-A, Hot (11 Leonis Minoris f, G8V M5V, Cicek Confederation)

There is little of interest on Zahak – an unremarkable rocky planet in an unremarkable star system – though it did see its share of traffic in the "Cicek Run" days. The Reticulans also attacked the system several times in the War years with small forces but did not gain a foothold in it. Nowadays, most traffic goes directly from Alula to Fei Lian to Naga, bypassing Zahak. The population profiting from the old waystation left, leaving only a mere thousand Cicek operating the downsized starport and engaging in minor ice-mining operations around the local gas giants. Some Cicek call this world "Little Lindworm", as while it lacks the larger population and trade influx of the after mentioned world, it is a perfect place for hiding ships, people, and objects, including pirate vessels and bases. A common rumor claims that the famous Cicek pirate, Iron-Hand, did hide a sizeable treasure under the rockball's surface. The nature of this treasure, however, varies between narrators, from precursor artifacts to a cryogenically-frozen Reticulan Elder to a motherlode of refined radioactives.

Reticulan Empire

At the Trailing-Rimward side of the Borderlands lies Reticulan Imperial space – old, well-developed, rich worlds controlled by the Reticulan House Thiragin. A few of them, such as Asura, sustained significant damage during the War, but most of the Reticulan Imperial worlds are developed and rich beyond what most Terran worlds can achieve. With the old Thiragin capital at Keid in Technate hands, the new Reticulan Imperial regional capital was established on the similarly wealthy Rana system.

Asura C798788-D, Temperate (YV Canis Minoris b, M4V, Temperate, Reticulan Empire)

Asura was the jewel of the Reticulan frontier – a wealthy agricultural world exporting exotic plant products to the entire Empire. Asura also held a major research station for House Thiragin, which was associated with dark rumors and fragmentary intelligence related to human abductions by the Reticulans. In the final months of the War, however, the vengeful Terrans launched a devastating "dark war" nuclear attack on Lamia's cities. Now the world is in ruins and its once-pristine blue skies are murky with radioactive dust. Although the worst of the weather problems, such as nuclear winter, have been corrected thanks to the planet-wide weather control network, the ecology is still collapsing fast and the planet is likely to be uninhabitable within a century; oxygen

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levels have dropped 2% in the last five years and the atmospheric Code was recently changed from 8 (Dense) to 9 (Dense, Taint) due to the dropping oxygen levels. The Reticulans, in typical fashion, are evacuating their citizens and setting up a long-term research program to study the planetary ecological disaster. The Reticulans, primarily from House Thiragin, have a very understandable dislike for humans.

Azazel B898951-D, Cold (HR 1614 c, K3V, Cold, Reticulan Empire)

The cold garden world of Azazel was the first Reticulan colony in this region, older even than Rana and Keid. There, the Elders of House Thiragin first set their throne. Further expansion into the even richer Keid system eventually led to the throne's relocation to that Emerald of the Coreward Frontier. Azazel evolved into an industrial hub, many of its palaces and temples replaced with glittering factories. Many ancient sites remain, however, and House Thiragin takes pride in their perfect architectural design with its octagonal symmetry.

Rumor has it that the ruins still contain ancient Reticulan archives, older than those on Keid or Rana. The Thiragin officials strongly deny such rumors. Regardless of this hypothetical treasure, however, the enormous cultural importance of this world makes it a tempting target for anyone trying to strike at imperial symbols, and it did endure a few terrorist attacks and acts of vandalism in the last two years. The Terran government has arrested several of these extremists, but did not press charges against any of them yet.

Azazel also holds major research facilities operated by House Thiragin. They grew exponentially in size after the Terrans nuked Asura, as the Reticulans relocated the surviving research staff from the Asura research centers to new sites on Azazel. Per common knowledge, these laboratories and campuses hold House Thiragin's research and development activities in biotechnology and advanced physics. However, leaked CRC reports show that the Reticulans took abducted humans to Asura, and later to Azazel, before and during the War. There are no verified reports of abductees who have returned from these laboratories, so rumors run wild about their true nature, from monstrous cybernetic programs to unfathomable experiments in psionics.

Baphomet B301733-D, Frozen (Stein 2051 b, M4V, Frozen, Reticulan Empire)

Any Terran or Technate ship entering legally the Reticulan Empire must undergo inspection at the Baphomet Highport rather than travel directly to Rana or to other Imperial worlds. The Reticulan cite safety and taxation reasons, but it is a well-known fact that this "treaty port" serves as a buffer between the Empire and unwanted socio-political influences, particularly from the Technate. This procedure, established with the peace accords ending the Terran War in 2258, made this otherwise unremarkable dusty iceball an instant boomtown profiting from the vast influx of trade. Baphomet is, naturally, a prime target for Technate and UTR espionage, as its accessibility and significant diplomatic presence are fertile ground for intelligence operations. Smugglers, however, prefer to evade Imperial customs and jump through Qandiša, despite the risk of seizure and confiscation of cargo if their ship does not carry the right encryption key – assigned on Baphomet upon inspection – which allows a non-Imperial ship to traverse Imperial space.

Fenrir D310434-D, Temperate (Ross 619 b, M4V, Reticulan Empire)

Fenrir is a remote, desolate ice-ball of very little importance save for its presence on the Terran border a mere two parsecs from the UTR worlds of Selket and Wormwood. Due to this fact, the Reticulan Empire operated a small listening post and naval refueling station in this system. A Terran attack towards the end of the War destroyed both. Once the peace agreements came into effect, rebuilding these facilities is low on the Reticulan list of priorities, especially as they must devote significant resources to the nearby ruined world of Aura. All that remains is a tiny prospecting station looking for valuable minerals in the Fenrir Belt, so far with modest results. The system's importance, however, lies in its use as a Technate smuggling and espionage route into and out of Imperial space, as military presence is minimal. The Technocrats have sympathizers in this system who can provide forged transponder codes for ships illegally entering Imperial space. Humans with Technate connects can get these installed as well.

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Gashadokuro C512458-D, Cold (Chi 1 Orionis b, G0V M6V, Reticulan Empire)

Chi1 Orionis is a binary star. The mainworld orbits the secondary M6V star, called Beta-Chi by the locals. The only planets orbiting the primary are in torch orbits. The mainworld is one of three planets orbiting the secondary star, with another rockball and a small gas giant. The entire population is dedicated to supporting the trade ships moving to and from the border. A large Terran population used to live on this frozen world, but now the Reticulans have been working hard to automate as much of the operation as they can now that the humans have left. Movement of the refugee ships from Asura are causing delays in the automation efforts and the local Minor House has recently come under Imperial scrutiny for “inefficiency”.

Jikininki C300559-D, Frozen (QY Urigae c-2, M5V M5V, Reticulan Empire)

Jikininki is a poor system that is only used as a refueling stop along the way for ships moving between Rakshasa and Patasola and Azazel. The binary stars are variables that are very close to each other (<0.05 AU) and their magnetic fields affect each other. The refueling station is on a large moon of the only gas giant in the system. The planetary government has been feeling the strain from the evacuation of Asura as many huge colony ships have been repurposed to move refugees away from the dying world and back into the center of the empire. Unlike its neighbor Gashadokura, the local Minor House has successfully managed to deal with the refugees, so far.

Jorōgumo C400455-D, Hot (RISC 608 b, BD, Reticulan Empire)

The world of Jorōgumo is a small, barren rock tidally locked to its primary star, itself an unimpressive Brown Dwarf. As the day side roasts in the close primary’s merciless rays and the night side freezes in eternal darkness, the Reticulans built the starport in the narrow twilight band between them. Thirty-five thousand Reticulans thus live in the dim light of RISC 608’s eternal sunset. The system’s importance lies in its position as a border world and “treaty port” between the Cicek and Imperial space, in a similar role to that of Baphomet. Most of the population works in the excise service or the starport facilities. There is little else of value in the local collection of rocks and iceballs comprising the system other than the wreckage of a few Terran, Reticulan, and Cicek warships mission-killed in the joint Terran-Cicek attack on the system in 2248. A population of approximately four thousand Cicek make their home here, for the most part traders and ice-miners – this is also a recruitment port for Cicek mercenaries used by the Reticulan Empire and its Noble Houses.

Lamia C867755-D, Cold (RISC 708 b, K4V M3V, Reticulan Empire)

Unlike Asura, Lamia managed to endure the War mostly undamaged. The only major Terran attack on this world destroyed a major part of its starport and the Naval base. Thankfully, the biosphere did not suffer significant damage. Lamia remains a prosperous agricultural world, albeit with reduced interstellar traffic. The world’s good conditions led to an influx of refugees from the stricken Asura. Luckily, Lamia’s sparse population allowed resettling millions of Reticulans refugees in its agricultural outback, further increasing production. The Reticulan Empire has rebuilt the naval base and began militarizing the system as its primary stronghold on their Spinward border with the Terrans and Cicek. Trade with the Cicek is also a major industry on Lamia as the first major stop on the trade route going to Fei Lian through Lindworm.

Muma Pădurii D511563-D, Frozen (Gliese 293 e, WD, Reticulan Empire)

A small Reticulan mining outpost with a population of 120,000. Despite being a “white Dwarf” the degenerate star appears yellow as the surface temperature is similar to that of Sol (5,700K). The mining outpost is on one of the three remaining planets in the outer system and is mined for heavy metals and radioactive left over from when the star went nova. The world is managed from Rakshasa, but is almost completely ignored with the current refugee crisis on Asura. The local administrator has ambitions of breaking away from House Thiragin and creating a new House Minor.

Muma Padurii has a significant human minority that chose to remain within the Empire rather than relocate to the UTR. These humans reject the rest of humanity and believe that the future lies with the Empire. Recruitment among these humans for House Huscarls and Imperial Legionnaires is considered a high honor.

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Patasola C553699-D, Cold (Gamma Leporis f-2, F6V, Reticulan Empire)

Patasola is a poor world – and was even more marginal in the past. Given its location on the communication line between Azazel and Rakshasa, the Empire invests in this world's development. Fifty years ago, the Reticulans began terraforming Patasola. They installed orbital mirrors concentrating sunlight on this cold, remote moon and aerobraking comets in its atmosphere to increase its pressure and add water to the otherwise dry world. This made Patasola's atmosphere thick enough for breathing and raised the temperature to tolerable, if cold, levels. The current step in terraformation, however, is more controversial, as the Reticulans are developing an orbital "lens" capable of concentrating sunlight into a tight beam of immense power, enough to burn through the planet's crust. The Terrans, however, suspect that this has military implications as an orbital weapon of mass destruction, but have not acted against it so far, beyond filing diplomatic complaints.

Poludnitsa B655798-D, Hot (Pi3 Orionis c, F6V, Reticulan Empire)

Poludnitsa's bureaucracy is surprisingly entrenched given the world's importance as a major waystation on House Thiragin's main trade-route to the Rimward. Minor House Narezha who control Poludnitsa see exhaustive record-keeping and strict licensing rules as logical ways to administer a world. Therefore, any commercial or legal action on Poludnitsa requires a complex licensing process and a prolonged certification procedure – both amounting to administrative torture of the applicant. However, as high administrative positions in the Empire are hereditary, however, Imperial authorities have a limited ability to intervene and improve the local administration's efficiency. Replacing the administrators is illegal and contrary to Imperial custom. House Thiragin, however, managed to wrest the starport and naval base off the Narezha hands and establish more efficient operations in anything regarding the trade and communication lines. However, the local population still lives under the stifling bureaucracy. The resentment for this system fuels the growth of a Technocratic insurgency which persisted even after the Technate's peace accord with the Empire. Once conspiracy theory suggests that House Thiragin is behind this insurrection, as it will eventually give it a legal excuse to forcibly intervene on this world under the pretense of quelling the rebellion. It is questionable, however, whether the Thiragin will risk exposing themselves to an armed Technocratic movement.

Qandiša D300311-D, Frozen (Luyten 1723 b, M4V, Reticulan Empire)

An unremarkable icy planet, Qandiša escaped the horrors of the war as the Terrans preferred to strike on the much more important Baphomet and Keid. Seven thousand Reticulans live on this planet, all direct corporate employees of House Thiragin. Officially, Qandiša is an ice mining station, but ice seems to have little value to a system without significant traffic or valuable compounds within the ice. This led to a rumor-mill surrounding this world. Some claim that it is a secret exile world for one or more disfavored members of House Thiragin, who live here in seclusion away from the seat of power on Rana. Others say that the Reticulans have uncovered something highly valuable – possibly a Precursor station – deep within the ice. Yet others posit that this is a secret staging ground for covert operations in nearby Technate space. These rumors might be true or false – and the truth might even be stranger. In any case, the systems minimal population and simple starport also make it a perfect conduit for smuggling ships into and out of the Reticulan Empire; the colony seems to ignore such traffic if it does not involve the locals in any illicit business and does not intrude the locals' private affairs.

Rakshasa B651552-D, Cold (Wolf 294 b-1, M4V, Reticulan Empire)

Rakshasa is the main Reticulan colony on this border with the UTR and has the largest military presence allowed by treaty. Few refugees are allowed to settle here and are instead moved farther into the imperial core. Rakshasa is controlled by a faction of House Thiragin that is quite sympathetic to the Technate movement. Rumors that Rakshasa will soon declare for the Technate are strongly denied by all parties involved. The Empress is said to be taking a personal interest in the situation.

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Rana A89A98A-D, Temperate (Rana d, K0IV, Reticulan Empire)

For centuries, Rana was the industrial hub of House Thiragin and the seat of its economic power. Deep beneath the world-ocean, prospectors have discovered vast mineral deposits, which led to rapid industrialization. This mineral wealth is not yet depleted and mining continues. The world ocean and the dense atmosphere are both polluted by this titanic industrial activity, but most residents do not mind this as they live in vast arcologies reaching from the world-ocean's floor to the surface. When House Thiragin lost Keid in 2258, it relocated its throne and administrative apparatus to Rana, the obvious choice in terms of infrastructure and labor force. The Reticulans also expanded the orbital shipyards, which are now occupied with rebuilding the fleets. This fact, as well as the presence of the main Thiragin drydocks in Rana orbit, makes it a prime target for Terran naval espionage, though the UTR, of course, denies such allegations and claims that it strictly adheres to the peace treaty.

Sasquatch C543688-D, Cold (RISC 510 d, K4V, Reticulan Empire)

Sasquatch was briefly occupied during the War by the Cicek and even after the Reticulan's retook the world, many Cicek remain on the planet. The million Cicek on Sasquatch provide many mercenaries; many of which are *not* going to House Thiragin.

Vritra C401356-D, Frozen (RISC610 e, BD, Reticulan Empire)

Vitra is a remote mining outpost run by Minor House Stoklijh. There is a sizeable human population that was brought in over a century ago as miners. House Stoklijh has been able to keep the Terran War a secret from the local human population. To the humans here, Terra and the entire human race is still under the thumb of House Thiragin and the Reticulan Empire, in clear violation of the peace treaty. House Stoklijh works very hard to control all communications with the rest of the Empire to ensure that the humans remain under their control.

Wendigo D411513-D, Cold (RISC 609 c, BD, Reticulan Empire)

Wendigo is a secondary Reticulan colony on the Cicek border which has seen some minor action during the War and now holds a modestly successful mining operation. The Empire did consider terraforming it, but there are no pressing reasons to do so except for satisfying scientific curiosity. The interesting thing about this world, however, is its ecosystem – which is unusually developed for such a marginal world. Most life forms live in vast underground cave systems where volcanism heats the air and water flows freely, albeit in small amounts. Research into the subterranean ecology has attracted much scientific activity from the Reticulans, as well as Cicek adventurers who believe that some of these organisms have potential medicinal uses and thus market value in Cicek and Terran space. There are also rumors about hidden Precursor ruins deep within the cave systems, but so far, the Reticulans made no claims of locating such xenoarchaeological findings.

Reticulan Technate

Five of the Reticulan border worlds conquered by Terra in the late War formed the Reticulan Technate, controlled by the rebel Technocratic Movement. They all suffered significant War damage, especially the Technate capital of Keid – the old House Thiragin seat of power – which saw heavy fighting at the final stage of the War. The Technocratic government, supported by Terra and managed by Reticulan scientists and engineers, devotes most of its resources for rebuilding the shattered economy. The local culture is far more stable than that of the Empire, but also far less stable and is prone to all sorts of weird projects and factionalism led by brilliant and eccentric Reticulan minds.

Baba Yaga C666786-D, Temperate (Kapteyn's Star d, M1VI, Temperate, Reticulan Technate)

A pleasant and very habitable world, Baba Yaga is the Technate's agricultural capital. It fell to the Terran offensive early in the War, long before Procyon, and became the "poster child" of the Technocratic Movement. The Terran conquerors acted wisely and were quick to hand over the day-to-day administration of this colony to the Technocratic rebels, while maintaining overall military control. Free from Imperial customs and encouraged

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by the Terrans to increase production, the Technocrats invested heavily in plant and livestock genetic engineering beyond what the Empire ever dared perform, leading to bumper crops and even exports of exotic foodstuffs and cosmetics to the Terran market. Today, this is a hub of genetic and biotechnological research; some rumors even claim that the Terrans use the compliant and secure Baba Yaga for biological research which would be frowned upon in Terran space, especially in the field of bio-mechanical systems and genetic enhancement of human soldiers. Politically, Baba Yaga enjoys an efficient and meritocratic civil service, which also manages the local economy and handles trade relations with the Terrans and the rest of the Technate, though this bureaucracy does not grant the same level of freedom as that enjoyed by the residents of Keid.

Buggane B400655-D, Temperate (Teegarden's Star c, M6V, Reticulan Technate)

Located two parsecs from Belobog, Buggane served as an important Reticulan military stronghold during the War, as well as staging ground for deploying units to Belobog. The Empire fortified this world and built its starport and naval bases underground to help defend them against bombardment. The Terrans hit Buggane multiple times. Multiple wrecked naval vessels, as well as war debris, form a "ring" at 100-planetary-diameter distance from the main world. This "ring" is still fertile ground for salvage operations, which are now carried out by the Technate government, as well as by Terran and Zhuzzh freelancers. The planet itself also saw major fighting and still holds extensive bunker networks built by the Empire. While the Imperial defenders did surrender to Terra after significant fighting, many underground shelters and communication tunnels remain unexplored, presumably abandoned.

Keid A855854-D, Temperate (Keid c, K1V WDA4 M4V, Reticulan Technate)

The final act of the Terran War was the invasion of Keid. Joint Terran, Cicek, Ssesslessian, and Technate forces assaulted the world with massed fleet. With the aid of local Technocratic rebels, they conquered the entire world in 2258, forcing the Reticulan Empire to sue for peace from a position of weakness. The victors then installed the Technocratic leadership in power over this world, and soon over the entire Technate. Today, the rapidly-recovering Keid is a vibrant technological and scientific capital world and the ideological heart of the Technocratic movement. It also holds the old Thiragin Archives, captured intact by the Terran Guard, and opened to researchers once the war ended. This repository of Imperial Reticulan data and historical records drew Terran scholars and adventurers thirsty for previously confidential Reticulan records. However, a common hypothesis claims that the retreating Thiragin took their darkest secrets with them and erased them from their archives.

Onibaba C200466-D, Frozen (Luyten's Star b-1, M3V, Reticulan Technate)

Onibaba is an old transit station on the Buggane-Procyon trade and communication route. During the War, it saw little action as the major battles occurred on Buggane, Baba Yaga, and Procyon. The Terrans took it by storm in the great offensive of 2244 and promptly installed the small Technocratic cell in power. These Technocrats, however, held little sway in Onibaba's population and had difficulties ridding the world of Imperial remnant resistance. In 2247, Baba Yaga's Technocratic headquarters took charge of things, with significant Terran assistance. Together, they managed to crush the Imperial loyalists. However, sympathies for the Empire still linger in Onibaba's ninety-thousand strong Reticulan population and sabotage attempts still occur despite Technate vigilance and well-armed Terran "counter-terrorism consultants".

Procyon B644955-D, Hot (Procyon c, F5VI BD, Reticulan Technate)

A formerly fortified industrial, colony world of the Reticulan Empire, Procyon is now a member of the Reticulan Technate. While most of the residents of this colony world are happy members of the Houses loyal to the Technate, there are still rebel groups fighting from several hidden bases on the planet. Additionally, by recent treaty, the polar but temperate sub-continent of Maera has been settled by a group of human colonists. While officially citizens of the Technate, most of the colonists are former military personnel and their families, many from Sirius, and they have strong loyalties to the UTR. Procyon is also a hot-bed of radical Technate activity; fomenting pro-Technate sympathies in several near-by Imperial worlds, most notably Rakshasa.

Ssesslessian Harmony

For centuries, the Ssesslessians were without a homeworld, their original world destroyed by the Reticulans. They vowed not to settle down until they enact divine punishment on the Reticulans, but during the War, Terran diplomatic efforts convinced some of them to settle on the former Reticulan colony of Mehen and the mining world of Jörmungandr. The Reticulan colonists, fearing massacre by the vengeful Ssesslessians, fled to the Rimward Imperial stars, leaving most of the infrastructure intact for the Ssesslessians to use. The Ssesslessian Harmony is a Terran client-state and trades extensively with Terra. They, however, refuse any contact with the Reticulans, either the Technate or the Empire, and any diplomatic or trade relations between the Harmony and the two Reticulan polities go through Terran and Zhuzzh intermediaries.

Jörmungandr C6A0635-C, Cold (Gliese 832 d-1, M1V, Ssesslessian Harmony)

Jörmungandr is an old Reticulan mining world, excavating its rich rare earth deposits for export to the neighboring Buggane and Keid. The Terrans took this world in 2244 with major Ssesslessian aid. Despite Terran promises of protection, most Reticulan miners fled to Keid, fearing Ssesslessian vengeance. The UTR then gave this world to the Ssesslessians, as part of the newly-established Ssesslessian Harmony, to help develop Mehen's economy. By the time three Ssesslessian cults took over production on Jörmungandr in 2252, the remaining Reticulan population migrated to the Technate. Now the Ssesslessians – experienced warriors but unskilled in heavy industrial operations – face the challenge of learning to use the equipment the Reticulans left behind on this world, with Terran technical assistance. Production still does not run smoothly, officially due to the Ssesslessians learning their ropes in planetside mining. Rumors, however, claim that the Reticulans have sabotaged their tools and left behind booby-traps in the mines before retreating, adding to the dangers of operating this industry.

Mehen B666736-D, Temperate (Epsilon Eridani d, K2V, Ssesslessian Harmony)

Terran and Ssesslessian forces took Mehen in late 2244 after five months of naval and groundside fighting. Facing defeat in the hands of the vengeful Ssesslessian fleets, House Thiragin evacuated Mehen's twelve million Reticulan inhabitants to Keid, as the Ssesslessians were very clear in expressing their mission to take divine vengeance on their old masters. The Terrans and Ssesslessians, therefore, conquered an eerily empty world. The Terrans encouraged the Ssesslessians to settle on Mehen – now declared their new homeworld – and adapt the abandoned Reticulan cities to their needs. The thiragin did leave booby traps behind – including three thermonuclear devices – but CRC specialists managed to disarm them. Rumors, however, still claim that the Reticulans left various surprises behind – from hidden nuclear bombs awaiting an activation signal to yet undetected laboratories brimming with advanced alien technology, though the authorities did not uncover any such secrets in the last decade and a half.

Regardless of such rumors, Mehen is now the capital of the new Ssesslessian Harmony – the new Ssesslessian state. The new inhabitants have an understandable dislike for the Reticulans, even their Technate allies, and they refuse to trade with them. Instead, such trade goes through Terran intermediaries. Some Ssesslessians, however, do not find such an embargo sufficient, and arm themselves for a “second round” with the Reticulans – much to the dismay for the Terran government which has a strong interest to preserve the peace accords for the long term.

Unclaimed Worlds

The Terran Borderlands include several worlds still unclaimed by the interstellar governments. Most are uninhabited except for the failed colony on Asherah and the illicit settlement on Koschei. These worlds are wide open to exploration and colonization. Some groups – mostly Terran and Cicek – have already expressed interest in colonizing these stars, though their remoteness slows down such plans as reconstruction of existing colonies takes precedence over establishing new ones.

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61 Virginis X741000-0, Temperate (61 Virginis f, G7V, Temperate, Unclaimed)

61 Virginis f is a dry, dusty, marginally-habitable world. Primitive fungal life clings to the rocky cliffs and dry riverbeds, where water flows once or twice a year in the short rainy seasons. A tiny sea – not even worthy of the name “ocean” tears through the world’s surface like a scar. The most advanced of 61 Virginis f’s life-forms live deep under this sea. These hardy creatures, combining characteristics of fungi and crustaceans, have evolved to tolerate the high concentration of salt and heavy metals. Terran scouts made a cursory survey of this world in 2256 but did not establish a permanent base. However, they did bring back samples of native life-forms with interesting biochemical properties, including an ability to “filter” metals out of the water and act as biological refineries. Such organisms have potential value to industrial research, and the New Terran Frontiers corporation plans sending an expedition to this planet in early 2260. Rumors also circulate about crumbling alien ruins presumably spotted by the scouts, but the Terran Scout Service denies any such findings.

Asherah E766370-D, Temperate (Beta Canum Venaticorum c, G0V, Temperate, Unclaimed)

Asherah has a reputation for bad luck. When the War broke, not all Terrans resolved to stay and fight for their independence from the Reticulan Empire. Some preferred to start their lives anew away from home, in peace and freedom. One such group was the privately-funded Lotan Project which launched the massive colony ship ISS Lotan in 2237 to colonize the Beta Canum Venaticorum system. No one has heard or seen any sign of the 5,000 Lotan colonists or their ship ever since. Until recently, the common theory was that the Lotan misjumped into an unknown destination, or that it was destroyed en-route. In 2255, however, Terran scouts made the first cursory survey of the Beta Canum system and found numerous signs of human habitation – with clear evidence that they did originate from the Lotan. However, despite widespread colonial construction, Terran explorers did not find even one survivor so far; the habitats and small craft are all empty. The fate of the ISS Lotan and its colonists remains unknown. Their mystery received an unexpected twist when a private prospector found Precursor ruins on Asherah itself in 2257. Since then, explorers found additional ruins. Today, the system is home to various survey groups, as well as less scrupulous individuals, who try to find out the fate of the old colonial mission. Some also seek to loot the many ruins of the old, abandoned colony.

Beta Comae Berenices X767000-0, Temperate (Beta Comae Berenices d, G0V, Temperate, Unclaimed)

The fourth world of the Beta Comae Bernices system is a “jack pot” world, perfect for colonization. Recently surveyed by the Terran Scout Service, there are several groups eager to colonize this beautiful world. One feature that has captured the imagination of Terrans are the local “dragons” which soar through the skies on their leathery wings. Several reporters have noted the similarities to the Fei Lian dragons in the Cicek Confederation, although it has not been confirmed if there is truly a genetic connection. Also, scattered across the surface are ruins that may date to the Precursor era. Several scouts reported activity within the ruins, but the UTR government has dismissed these stories. The most persistent rumor claims that explorers spotted Zhuzzh moving among the ruins, but they appeared to carry simple equipment which looked primitive even by Zhuzzh standards. Some say that these are the survivors of a failed Zhuzzh expedition to these ruins, while others posit a primitive Zhuzzh sub-species confined to this world.

Gliese 432 X510000-0, Cold (Gliese 432 c-2, K0V WD, Unclaimed)

Recently surveyed on 2259, Gliese 432 c-2 is a rocky moon orbiting a majestic gas giant under the distant light of the two Gliese 432 stars. Out of the many moonlets and iceballs in this system, this moon seems to hold the only noteworthy mineral deposits. These deposits, however, are insufficient to attract a serious colonial expedition in the near future. The only interesting feature of this system is a large, triangular spacecraft floating in the gas giant Gliese 432 c’s uppermost atmosphere. This hulk is old and lifeless and has not been discovered yet by Terran scouts. This is an ancient Precursor-era Reticulan mothership, slowly being eroded by the thin winds despite its advanced construction. Boarding such craft will be a challenge due to its location in the gas giant’s atmosphere, but it might hold secrets and artifacts worth a fortune.

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Groombridge 1830 X852000-0, Cold (Groombridge 1830 d, G8VI, Unclaimed)

Groombridge 1830 d is a small, marginally habitable world. Surveyed in 2258, it is low on the priority list for colonization by the Terran government or corporations due to its thin, if breathable, atmosphere and limited hydrology, as well as modest mineral deposits and a primitive ecosystem. However, unbeknownst to the Terran authorities, there is one site of human “habitation” of this world. The Terran cruiser Simon Bolivar attempted an emergency jump under heavy Reticulan fire during the Battle of Procyon in 2244. With its main engine struck by a Reticulan particle beam when charging for the jump, the Bolivar suffered a critical misjump and appeared, two grueling weeks later, in close orbit around Groombridge 1830 d. With the captain dead and the hull barely spaceworthy, the ship was stranded far from Terran space and crashed-landed on this marginally-habitable planet. The executive officer – herself gravely wounded – ordered the surviving crew to enter cryostasis and await rescue while running on long-term emergency power. Part of the crew, mutinied and left the ship to settle the planet, hoping for better chances of survival in the wilds than in emergency low berths. They were mistaken. They landed on the planet and proceeded to build a small settlement near a small body of water. However, they lacked proper colonial supplies. For five hard years of attempting to farm the hard soil in freezing temperatures and subsist on local flora and fauna which were compatible with human biology only on paper, the mutineers died one by one by starvation, disease, and hypothermia. The last survivor committed suicide in 2249 seeing no hope of rescue, unwilling to return to the crashed ship where - if found by any awakened crewmember – he might face court martial for mutiny. Their makeshift colony now stands dead in the cold. The crew remaining on the Bolivar, hidden in a mountain valley overrun by photosynthetic fungi – which are this world’s equivalent of trees – still survive in cold sleep. Their cursory survey did not find them, though a more thorough scan of the planet will detect the ship’s faint distress signal.

Koschei C675530-D, Cold (HR4523 e, G2V M4V, Unclaimed)

As per official UTR documents, Koschei is not yet colonized. The regional officials on Jambavan, however, are well-aware of a sizable colony on this cold but habitable world. It is also highly likely that the central government on Terra knows of its existence. Due to its distance from settled space, however, Koschei remains semi-independent as the Terran government is yet to formally claim it. Official records speak of a “forward survey base” – which is little more than a lawless settlement of nearly a hundred thousand inhabitants, surrounded by several smaller colonies. The reason this settlement grew so rapidly was the presence of numerous Precursor ruins on this world, attracting a crowd of fortune-seekers and the attendant criminals, bandits, and smugglers. With no official government, each faction or gang on Koschei must fend for itself against its competitors, sometimes leading to open warfare. The only semblance of a government Koschei has is the organized crime syndicate – styling itself “Koschei Ventures Incorporated” – in control of the starport. KVI runs the facilities, collects “usage fees”, and limits gang infighting inside Startown, but otherwise ignores the business of visitors. This made life easy for pirates to settle on Koschei, now raiding the neighboring colonies. Eventually, the UTR government will have to act and bring law and order to Koschei, probably with an iron fist, but until then, the world is a free-for-all battleground, pirate base, and paradise for all sorts of scum and villains.

RISC 106 X500000-0, Temperate (RISC 106 b, M4V, Temperate, Unclaimed)

The remote RISC 106 system has only been cursorily surveyed by the UTR Scout Service. The second world from the dim star has been designated as the mainworld due to remote detection of exotic metal deposits. RISC 106b is unusual for being a large world without an atmosphere. A very large crater dominates one hemisphere and hints at a violent event millions of years ago, that stripped the planet of its atmosphere and almost destroyed the world. The UTR plans to send a survey team back to this system, but due to other priorities, nothing is likely to happen for several years.

United Terran Republic

The United Terran Republic dominates the Coreward half of the Terran Borderlands and extends to several more colony worlds to the Coreward and the Trailing of the area shown on the map, though the Terran economic and political core is at the Terra-Sol system, Chiron, Barnard, and Belobog. The UTR is expanding in all directions, except for the Rimward where treaties and agreements have established a permanent border. The Terran government invests in bolstering the colonies along that border to shore up its defenses against potential Imperial Reticulan aggression.

Adlet C310442-B, Frozen (Wolf 424 Bc, M6V/M6V, Frozen, United Terran Republic)

Adlet is a secondary transit station on the route from Chiron and Jambavan to the colonies and the Beta Canum frontier. It thus enjoys a decent flow of traffic and serves as a “gateway to the high frontier” beyond the better-developed Jambavan. It is also a lawless outpost where the Terran Police will look the other way from the typical disruption of public order, and has a reputation for being a rough place full of hard people. Other than that, Adlet is an unremarkable iceball Important transit-station. Otherwise an unremarkable iceball. The colony itself is buried deep under the ice as both Wolf 424 A and B are emission stars and solar flares are often. Despite this, these flares still occasionally disrupt communications in the system.

Amaterasu B685885-D, Temperate (Epsilon Indi f, K5V/BD/BD, Temperate, United Terran Republic)

The pleasant, if slightly dry, world of Amaterasu is one of humanity’s oldest colonies, dating back to the early EFA days. Thanks to its location far to the Coreward from the frontlines, Amaterasu was spared from the horrors of war and quickly developed from an agricultural colony to a bustling urban world on its way to become a major industrial hub. It has, however, a dark history. Under the EFA, Amaterasu was a center for Reticulan biotechnological research using human experimental subjects – mostly children. The anger against these atrocities eventually served as a spark which ignited the Terran Revolution. While angry mobs tore down the known Reticulan research stations in the early weeks of the revolt, rumor has it that even today, after three decades of independence, hidden and dormant alien research bases still exist below Amaterasu’s cities. Depending on the storyteller, these supposedly contain either untold biological horrors or technological wonders beyond imagining. Or both.

Barnard B665843-D, Cold (Barnard’s Star b, M4V, Cold, United Terran Republic)

The Barnard colony – one of humanity’s first interstellar colonies founded soon after the Reticulan invasion – is a rarity: a highly habitable world orbiting a dim red dwarf. Barnard’s Star b orbits its main star in its thin habitable zone, close enough to be tidally locked to it. Barnard’s “day side” is a sun-scorched desert wracked by searing winds, while its “night side” is a bleak land of ice. The colony encircles the world’s “Twilight Zone”, enjoying moderate conditions. The temperature differentials between Barnard’s “day” and “night” sides, however, creates vigorous circulation and an abundance of storms, for which the world is famous. Barnard was far enough to the Coreward to avoid the ravages of war, except for a single deep raid in 2242, when a Reticulan fleet managed to break through Terran lines and bombard the world for a short time before their inevitable defeat by Terran defensive squadrons. Terran Naval Infantry managed to capture two of the Reticulan carriers and one large laboratory ship intact, and the UTR sealed off a section of the Barnard High Port to study and reverse-engineer their technology. This area is still interdicted to this day despite the end of hostilities.

Bathala D653342-A, Hot (GL Virginis b, M5V, Hot, United Terran Republic)

Bathala is a marginal world. The atmosphere is at the lower limit of breathable pressure, water is scarce, and the red sun scorches the planet’s dry soil. This world, however, enjoys significant mineral wealth and good prospects for terraformation and thus is a good candidate for colonization. Terran colonists set up the first habitats in September 2257, and now a thin but constant flow of colonists settle on the dry purple-weed steppes of Bathala’s higher latitudes. Terra is five jumps away – ten weeks including typical starport stay – for the usual Jump-2 couriers and traders, and news reach Bathala late. The Law is limited to the tiny local Terran Police station

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and the Colonial Militia, who together have some influence inside startown proper but have little sway over the vast outback. Together with the infrequent visits by Naval Patrol Frigates, this makes life easy for all sorts of outlaws and assorted scum. Bathala also suffered two recent raids by pirates jumping from nearby Koschei. On the other hand, this is a perfect location for those wishing to vanish from Terran society, and at least three groups have already established unsanctioned colonies in the Bathalan Outback.

Belobog A542945-D, Hot (Tau Ceti f-5 G8V, Cold, United Terran Republic)

Belobog was a major industrial world since the EFA era. Despite barely breathable air, sparse water, and the scorching sun, few worlds held greater mineral wealth than Belobog. After the initial mining boom, the world developed industry on a massive scale and was the EFA's second industrial hub after Terra, as well as home for hundreds of thousands of Reticulan engineers. When the War broke, the entire Reticulan population evacuated to Buggane and Procyon, and the Terrans took over production. The Reticulans understood the crucial strategic value of this world very well and made it the target of great military effort in the early-mid War. Massive battles raged on Belobog for almost a decade, all while the Terrans made herculean efforts to keep the factories churning under constant bombardment and attacks by the Reticulan invaders. Terran and Cicek forces repelled the enemy in 2243 and since then Belobog is on its way to recovery. However, it still bears the scars of war. Ruins dot the surface and the air still carries dust and fallout from the battles and bombardment. Worse, countless unexploded ordinances still await in the ruins, making their recovery and reconstruction a risky endeavor. Cleaning efforts are slow and dangerous, and there are also private parties interested in recovering such bombs without the government's consent. Furthermore, millions of Terran, Reticulan, and Cicek soldiers have lost their lives on Belobog, and many families back on Terra still search for their lost sons and daughters who fell in the heroic struggle for the UTR's industrial bulwark.

Bhadrakali D663342-A, Cold (61 Ursae Majoris f, G8V, United Terran Republic)

Bhadrakali is a dry and cold world, nonetheless enjoying a breathable atmosphere at optimal pressure and composition. Local life is primitive and exhibits both plant and fungal characteristics, but the soil is fertile enough for Terran plants. The Terran Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel has great plans for this world, and has set up a Scout and Survey Base near its developing starport. The population, however, is still tiny, and the Scout Base's six-fighter squadron is insufficient to deter pirate incursions from the neighboring Koschei, though its presence does make the system safer than the nearby Bathala system. The Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel is now pressuring the Terran Navy to allocate a Patrol Frigate for full-time monitoring of the Bhadrakali system.

NeoTerran Frontiers has recently established a small research base on another planet in this system, the frozen world of Kalika. This planet has a very long, and slow elliptical orbit around 61 Ursae Majoris. It has a "warm" period of several decades and after that a long "cold" period in deep space. Kalika was first surveyed a decade ago while in the "cold" period and classified its life as primitive and microbial, with the supposed apex of evolution being lichen-like vegetation. The world is now advancing into its "warm" period. The atmosphere thickens and some of the ice thaws. Rumors claim that this long "spring" has awakened more complex life-forms, but NeoTerran Frontiers is tight-lipped about its Kalika research station.

Chiron A888884-D, Cold (Alpha Centauri C b, M6V, Cold, United Terran Republic)

Humanity's first extrasolar colony, founded a year after the Reticulan invasion, was a cold but very habitable world orbiting Proxima Centauri. Alpha Centauri A and Alpha Centauri B also have life-bearing planets, but those are less habitable than Chiron and thus listed as "secondary worlds" in Reticulan and UTR records. This world is also a major scientific hub of Terran space, as many cutting-edge R&D firms – as well as government research stations – have long existed in the Centauri system and on Chiron itself. Chiron survived the war with minimal damage. The Terran Navy stopped the Reticulan "Dark War" thrust along the Solar Main at Penghou and only a small raiding squadron reached Chiron. From the missiles it launched before its utter destruction by the Terran fleet, only one hit its target. The missile, carrying a fusion warhead, reached the Chiron Island 3 orbital colony at

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Chiron's L3 point. While it detonated prematurely, damage to the colony was extensive, with a cost of 3 million human lives. Authorities evacuated the few survivors from the station's charred hull. Now it stands as a mute testament to the horrors of war.

Chukwu C311643-C, Frozen (UV Ceti Ac, M5V, M6V, United Terran Republic)

In the earlier EFA days, when Jump-2 ships were expensive and Jump-1 ships far more common, interstellar traffic moved from Vishnu to Belobog and Amaterasu through Chukwu. However, as the Reticulans allowed the EFA to develop better jump engines, starships switched to direct jumps from Vishnu to Belobog and Hachiman, bypassing this old transit station. While the initial "boomtown" which grew around the starship stopover withered away, the discovery of rich uranium deposits drew new colonists to Chukwu. Today, this is a busy mining world exporting radioactives to Belobog's industry. During the War, it briefly regained its status as a transit station, as Terran forces used it as a staging ground for forces later sent to the Belobog front lines. Today the military bases stand empty, their hardware sold as surplus. Chukwu retains, however, several "deep reserve" naval sub-stations for use in the event of a future Reticulan invasion of Terran space.

Damballa D630442-B, Temperate (Groombridge 34 b, M1V, M3V, United Terran Republic)

Damballa is an oft-overlooked world bypassed by the trade and communication lines going from Belobog to Amaterasu through the better-developed Hachiman. The world itself is an inhospitable desert with thin, dust-filled air, and the system lacks any significant mineral deposits. Damballa earned some fame when prospectors discovered a Precursor obelisk in one of its larger craters in 2253. Further xenoarchaeological investigations, however, did not yield additional ruins and artifacts, and eventually Damballa returned to its obscurity. Some conspiracy theories claim that CRC-32 found additional ruins on one of the more remote moons in this system, which are said to be psionically-active. However, there is no significant traffic of government officials at the planet's tiny starport, or in any detectable range from Damballa, making such claims questionable at best.

Domovoi C000685-B, Cold (Wolf 359 c, M6V, United Terran Republic)

Terran forces took Domovoi, originally a Reticulan mining colony in a rich asteroid belt, in 2238 as part of the preparation for the final assault on Sirius. Soon afterwards, Domovoi became a crucial transit station on the communication and supply line between Sirius and Belobog. The Reticulan evacuation to Keid stopped all mining operations in the system, and Terran military authorities invested heavily in defending Domovoi as an important communication station, rather than renewing the mining effort. Now that the War is over, Terran and Technate miners began reactivating the old Reticulan mining platforms. This process is slow, however, due to damage caused to the rigs during naval battles in the system, as well as various malfunctions, some of which are suspected to result from boobytraps left behind by the retreating Reticulans. This makes asteroid mining platform salvage a major business in the Domovoi belt, offering rewarding, if dangerous, jobs to people with naval, industrial, and technical experience.

Fūjin D6A0261-A, Cold (Ross 780 b-1, M4VI, United Terran Republic)

Fūjin is a tiny, desolate outpost of barely a hundred souls, managed from Amaterasu as the Ross 780 system is of little commercial or military importance. Orbiting the gas giant Yebisu, this moon has a thick methane-CO2 atmosphere and no free water. The local manage the starport and man the system's two rescue boats. Other than that, there is little to see here. Ironically, this makes Fūjin an excellent place to hide from unwanted attention, as patrols are scarce and there is only one Terran Police officer in the entire system. On two documented occasions, as well as several alleged ones, criminal fugitives desiring to avoid Terran law on Amaterasu or even Belobog hid here until the heat cooled enough to allow their return to their old haunts. Theoretically, this system would also be a perfect spot for hiding all sorts of covert research projects run by corporations or the UTR government, but no such facilities exist as far as the public, or even regional administrators, are aware.

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Hachiman C713642-C, Cold (Ross 248 b, M6V, United Terran Republic)

An important transit station on the Belobog-Amaterasu communication and trade route, Hachiman grew a population of seven million, concentrated in its bustling Startown and Highport. The world itself is a dry, dusty planet with large ice caps. However, due to its near-optimal gravity and abundance of water ice, it is a prime candidate for terraformation. The Viriditas Incorporated has recently acquired permission from UTR authorities to study the possibilities of such terraformation. Their research stations dot Hachiman's cold deserts. Their research data, as well as their innovative sensor technologies, are worth a fortune, and the corporation has stationed heavily-armed security forces in their research bases to deter industrial espionage.

Hades C210342-B, Frozen (RISC 666 b, BD, United Terran Republic)

In the early days of EFA interstellar colonization, this tiny iceball orbiting a failed sun one parsec away from Terra played a crucial role by granting Jump-1 access to the vast Solar Main. At its heyday in the middle 22nd century, Hades sported a population of eleven million and developed a sprawling startown, catering to the constant influx of interstellar traffic. However, when the Reticulans eased the technological restrictions placed on the Terrans, the new generation of Jump-2 ships began to bypass the bleak RISC 666 system and travel directly from Terra to Barnard or Chiron. Hades' economy declined, and with it the population slowly migrated to better pastures. Today, nine thousand people still live on this frozen rock, clinging to their families' old properties, and engaging in the minimal amount of mining available in the system. Around them, vast urban structures and cavernous landing bays stand empty and abandoned under the brown dwarf's dim red light. This emptiness tends to make human beings uneasy, and soon enough various ghost stories began to circulate in Terran space about Hades and its supposed haunting by alien ghosts or about Precursor artifacts buried deep beneath its ice. The world even sports a small tourist industry surrounding these stories, but even then, the visitor influx is limited.

Hanuman C712462-B, Cold (Ross 128 c, M4V, United Terran Republic)

Hanuman used to be a marginal but somewhat habitable world on the old Solar Main. In the War, the Reticulans bombarded it with meson cannons in a "dark war" assault, destroying most life on the planet and throwing it into a deep ice age. Today it is a lifeless ruin managed from Jambavan. The only remaining colony is a small scout base manages the transit station and has recently started salvaged operations on the many old Terran military installations now covered by ice and debris. Rumor has it that a Reticulan battleship, full of highly advanced technology, has also crashed on Hanuman, but concrete evidence for this is yet to be found.

Jambavan B6877A9-D, Temperate (WX Ursae Majoris b-1, M2V M6V, United Terran Republic)

Jambavan is a highly habitable Terran second-generation colony and the informal capital of the Spinward frontier. During the War, it managed to avoid significant orbital bombardment but it did suffer a large-scale Reticulan ground invasion. The man who led the resistance and pushed the Reticulans back to the stars was General Yosef Rabus of the Terran Guard. His popularity as the Hero of Jambavan catapulted him into the office of Planetary Administrator and now he treats this world as his personal domain. Rabus has a growing tendency to abuse his power and knows very well that the locals will let him get away with many authoritarian acts due to his reputation. His unpopular political opposition claims that he also skims the generous reconstruction budget and plays favorites with various contractors, but he adamantly denies such claims and considers them to be personal slander and political muck-racking.

Kresnik C400685-C, Hot (Van Maanen's Star d-3, WD, United Terran Republic)

Kresnik is a rock. However, it is a radioactive mineral rich rock, so rich that local background radiation warrants constant monitoring of the local miners' radiation exposure. Kresnik maintains a population of five million miners supplying radioactive isotopes, fissile material, and rare earths to the burgeoning industry of Belobog. The UTR government considers this mining operation to be strategically important, and thus the government runs the mines. Kresnik's administration is surprisingly efficient, though centralized, and tends to hire former military officers for its administrative positions. However, with the demilitarization of the Terran economy now that the War is over, the Terran government considers selling the mines to a private concern. This prospect of acquiring

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a fully-equipped, vastly rich mining colony attracts great corporate attention from New Terran Frontiers, Chiang Robotics, and even the Durnhal Colonial Bank. Meanwhile, the miners themselves frown upon such plans, as they might destabilize their jobs, and worse – insert all sorts of civilian administrators “corporate drones” the otherwise militaristic Kresnik culture.

Kurma C400541-C, Temperate (WISE 0855–0714 b, BD, United Terran Republic)

While not located yet on a “proper” trade or communication route, Kurma is the “Gateway to the Coreward Frontier” and the place from which colonial and exploratory expeditions embark on their journeys to far-away stars. This world held only minor strategic importance in the War and thus the Reticulans never attacked it even at the height of their thrust along the neighboring Solar Main. Today this is a prosperous, if rough-and-tumble, transit station and secondary mining outpost comfortably located a mere Jump-2 from the core-worlds of Barnard and Chiron. Kurma also holds at least four confirmed Precursor sites, currently being excavated by Terran xeno-archaeologists. The most prominent of these is a massive ring-shaped structure, or arcology, standing on its “side” on the planet’s surface, rising a hundred meters into the air and harboring a vast maze of ancient architecture within its metal walls.

Parvati D400485-A, Temperate (Gliese 408 c-4 M3V, United Terran Republic)

During the early War, Parvati was a secondary waystation in the “Cicek Run” from Terra to Fei Lian. In later stages of the War, however, Rudra eclipsed Parvati as a transit station, and the local starport fell into disuse. The current population engages in small-scale mining operations, exporting raw ore to Cicek space. This remote world, however, makes an ideal hiding spot for pirates and smugglers, as naval presence amounts to monthly visits by a Patrol Frigate and much rarer “showing of the flag” by a Light Cruiser. While this illegal activity hardly reaches that of Lindworm, Parvati is still a hotbed for interstellar outlawry and all sorts of illicit trade with the anarchic Cicek.

Penghou D830485-A, Boiling (Luhman 16 b, BD, BD, United Terran Republic)

The greatest atrocity in the War took place on Penghou. During the great Reticulan offensive along the Solar Main, the Reticulans evaporated Penghou’s seas and most of its atmosphere with heavy meson and particle weapons to deny its use by Terrans as a military fort. By the time the Terran fleets arrived and repulsed the Reticulan armada, little was left alive on this world. Now it is little more than a secondary transit station surrounded by the bones of hundreds of thousands of Terrans. As Penghou is a symbol to the War and its horrors, there is talk in the Terran government about re-terraforming this world to show Terra’s resilience in the face of alien aggression, but so far no one has submitted a concrete proposal for such a costly undertaking.

Rudra C8B2521-C, Boiling (Wolf 359 c, M6V, United Terran Republic)

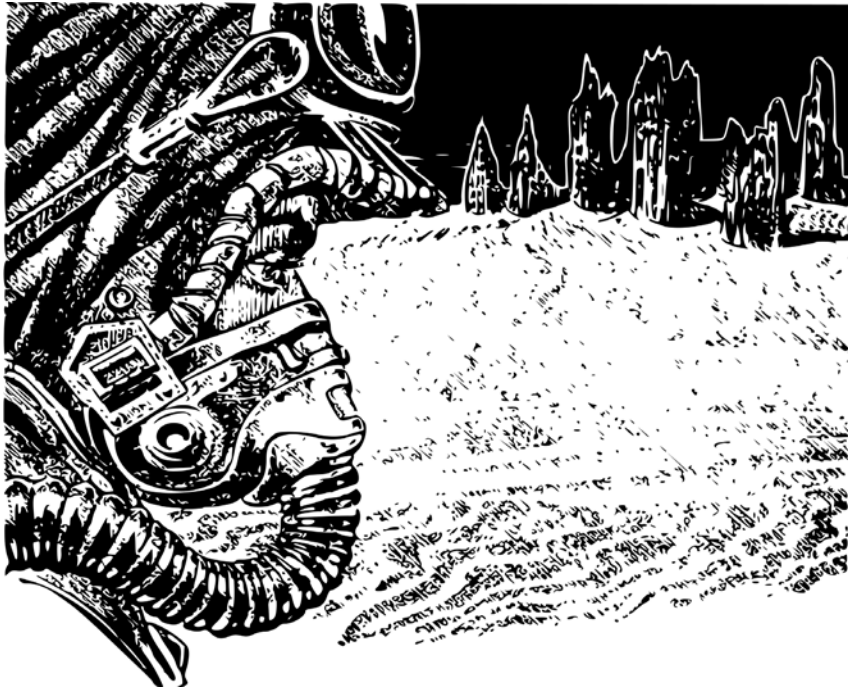
Rudra used to be the last stop on the “Cicek Run” before entering Cicek space proper. Today, it is a major trading port with the Cicek Confederation. Rudra itself is a hellish world gripped by a runaway greenhouse effect which possesses a caustic atmosphere. The settlement is actually a large orbital station built into a metallic asteroid to protect its residents from Wolf 359’s infrequent but occasionally powerful stellar flares. Of Rudra’s hundred thousand residents, thirty thousand are Cicek traders and colonists. Their presence on this world over the last generation influenced local Terran culture and led to the infamous Rudra informality. The official government is content to stand back and let the locals run their own business undisturbed, much to the chagrin of the Ministry of Finance and the Economy, which would prefer a tighter grip on the flow of goods from and to Cicek space.

Selket B000410-D, Temperate (El Canceri b, M5V, United Terran Republic)

Officially, the system contains only a highly-automated mining colony owned by Chiang Robotics Inc., several thousand belters, as well as the ruins of an old Naval base destroyed in the war. The UTR, however, frantically works on building several secret asteroid battle-stations. The rationale is that in the event of a second war, the Reticulans will see Selket as a weak link in Terran defenses and thus use it to invade; then they will fall into this well-prepared trap. Chiang is very unhappy with the Naval presence and wants to keep the system to themselves.

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Several recent delays and minor mishaps have occurred, making some naval officials believe that Chiang is taking a more active hand in affairs. Chiang only operates the main processing center and starport, independent belters locate and mine the scattered metals in the belt. Typical of many belter communities, outside interference is not welcomed.



Semargl D810200-A, Temperate (Wolf 498 c-5, M1V, United Terran Republic)

Semargl is a new and incredibly remote Scout Base on the far edge of settled Terran space. The moon itself enjoys Earthlike gravity but only has a trace atmosphere and no free surface water. The three hundred people living on Semargl are Terran Scout Service personnel engaged in survey of the world and the numerous other worlds of the gas giant Raróg. Preliminary findings point towards potentially good mineral resources, though more thorough prospecting is still underway. Scouts returning from Semargl to more civilized stations love to tell all sorts of tall tales about the world and its system, from life presumably flourishing in Raróg's upper atmosphere, to an abandoned – possibly misjumped – Reticulan mothership, to Precursor artifacts. At the present, it is impossible to tell truth from fiction regarding the Semargl system.

Sirius B100566-D, Boiling (Sirius h, A1V WD, United Terran Republic)

Sirius Star Base, referred to as “The Dog Pound”, is a sprawling military base spread out over a large part of surface of a rockball world that orbits Sirius well inside its habitable zone. Most of the installation is below ground to provide some protection from the heat and solar radiation. The base takes advantage of the nearby star with a large array of solar panels, making the planetoid shine brightly from space. Many of these panels are being removed and shipped to other bases, primarily Svarog, and large sections of the surface are filled with abandoned skeletons of giant solar arrays.

The base at its peak housed over five million people with a transient population three to four times that. The current population, barely two hundred thousand military personnel, is tasked with salvaging the materials and closing most of the bases' facilities. The UTR hopes to reduce the Dog Pound to a sustained population of about ten thousand within a few years. Most of the civilian population has already been relocated to other bases, with most of the administrative functions transferred to Svarog.

The Sirius system is very heavily patrolled by the UTR Navy and civilian ships can expect to be escorted by fighters or other small craft whenever they are in-system. The entire system is under UTR Naval authority and

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any ship can be boarded and searched at any time without a reason.

Within the last year, a large Zhuzzh clan has entered the system and is working under contract with the Navy to salvage the many Terran and Imperial wrecks throughout the system due to the decades of fighting.

Svarog B410666-D, Hot (DX Cancri c, M6V, United Terran Republic)

Svarog is a barren system that is only occupied due to its location on the border of UTR and Reticulan Imperial and Technate space. Svarog, unlike Sirius, is not being downsized. Only two parsecs from the Reticulan colony on Asura, Svarog has been designated as the primary military base on this border.

DX Cancri, Svarog main star, is a flare star with random, intermittent changes in brightness up to a fivefold increase. Luckily, the flares usually provide several weeks warning for the inhabitants to take the necessary precautions.

Svarog base, called “The Forge”, was a major military base for the Terrans during the war and has been designated as the primary base under the new peace. As the Dog Pound is downsized, the Forge is growing. Most of the administrative functions were transferred early this year from Sirius and the base is a confusing mix of personnel being mustered out and those transferring in to bolster the local facilities. Dozens of starships take off and land every day and local space is filled with military and civilian ships of all sizes. Within a year, the local population will exceed ten million, half of them civilians.

Recent mineral surveys of the three other worlds in the system have revealed the presence of scattered deposits of rare metals that will bolster the local economy as well. The local civilians and miners have begun grumblings of a civilian government rather than the current military rule for the system. The issue has been elevated with the UTR Naval Command; the local Admiral supports the transition to a civilian government as he is too busy to deal with the “grumbling civies”.

Unlike on Sirius, the naval command on Svarog have rejected several requests by Zhuzzh clans and restricts all local salvage operations to licensed Terran companies.

Tanuki B610643-C, Temperate (Lalande 21185 b-1, M2V, United Terran Republic)

Tanuki, a large moon of the magnificent gas giant Mujina, is a major port on the Terran-Cicek trade and communication route. During the Reticulan thrust along the Terran main in 2242 it was the site of five major naval battles and battered hulks and battle wrecks still litter its higher orbits. When the Terrans drove away the invaders in 2243, the UTR government invested heavily in rebuilding Tanuki’s bombarded starport due to its strategic importance. The local population is getting close to ten million. Most of the residents work in starport-related jobs and businesses, though there is also a good amount of work in post-war salvage. Even today, seventeen years after the battles, there is still good salvage to be found in this system.

Terra A877A46-D, Temperate (Sol d, G2V, United Terran Republic)

Mother Terra, Humanity’s Birthplace – the UTR’s capital and the most populous world in Terran space. In the EFA era and during the War, the world suffered from unrestrained industrial development for export to the Reticulan Empire and later for the War effort. Despite the environmental problems and overcrowded cities, jobs are easy to come by in the industrial sector and the overgrown Terran public administration apparatus. Due to overcrowding and environmental instability, many Terrans – nativist attachment to Terra aside - seek new life in the colonies. As most Terran voters live on Terra and its sister-worlds in the Sol system, anyone seeking a career in larger-scale Terran politics eventually comes to the Motherworld. The UTR government itself does not reside on Terra but rather at Unity City in the L3 point between Terra and the moon.

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Vamana C100463-A, Temperate (AD Leonis d, M3V, United Terran Republic)

When the Reticulans invaded the Solar Main, they bypassed the minor transit station on Vamana and jumped directly to Hanuman. This made this world an excellent staging points for Terran espionage behind Reticulan lines. Soon enough it became the site of a Scout base – a Naval listening post – and bases for various deep-raider ships. Once the War was over, the UTR moved its naval efforts to Selket, practically abandoning the base. Today, several ex-Navy and ex-Scouts renegades have set up shop in the abandoned installation and use it as a safe harbor for smuggling, illicit salvage, and even outright piracy targeting the economic influx brought in by the reconstruction efforts. However, they do retain the Scout's Honor and refrain from attacking their Scout Service brothers and sisters; in fact, they do offer refueling to passing Scout ships for old times' sake.

Vishnu C200588-D, Frozen (RISC 303 b, BD, United Terran Republic)

The trade and communication route from Terra to the Trailing colonies such as Belobog and Amaterasu goes through Vishnu. Orbiting a dim brown dwarf, this desolate iceball became prosperous from the large volume of interstellar transit through this system. The Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel effectively manages this world through a local bureaucratic apparatus and employs a third of the population. During the War, Vishnu suffered several raids launched from Buggane, but the main threat to this world's security came from a more covert direction. As communications from Central Command on Terra to the Belobog frontlines passed through Vishnu, this was a logical focus for the Reticulan espionage effort. The discovery of this spy network in 2241 led to an aggressive purge of the local administrator from potential collaborators and spies, and the official version is that this crackdown uprooted the Reticulan covert operatives from Terran communication lines. Rumors persist, however, of sleeper agents and hidden listening posts hidden under Vishnu's ice, though little concrete evidence of this has surfaced. These rumors, though, fuel the moderately paranoid administrative culture on Vishnu, where the fear of spies and Reticulan conspiracies is still alive in the hearts and minds of the administrative and security apparatus.

Wormwood D653641-A, Cold (ADS 7251 b, M0V K7V, United Terran Republic)

Wormwood is a marginal, cold, and dusty Terran colony. Its main settled area is in a vast equatorial chasm where air pressure is more bearable and where there is some protection from dust storms. Wormwood developed quickly as a colony during the late EFA era and the early War, but during the Reticulan push along the Solar Main, the old, highly militarized Downport was destroyed by a Meson Gun attack. After the Reticulans were repulsed, the UTR built a new starport closer to the population center, aimed at civilian commerce. Construction of the Highport is also on-going with a lot more military ships in the system than would be expected from such a frontier colony.

The world got its name from its bitter nature and desolate soil. Additionally, the colonists have given this name to a hardwood-equivalent common to the rift valley, where the secretions of a worm-like creature interact with a local tree producing photo-luminescent wood that is fast becoming fashionable among rich Terrans.

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Terran Borderlands Basic Astrographic Data, 2260 AD

Name	Hex	UWP	BS	G	Trade	Temp	AL	Star	Stellar Data
61 Virginis	0302	X741000-0		G	Ba Po	Temp	Un	61 Virginis	G7V
Adlet	0603	C310442-B			Ni	Frozen	Tr	Wolf 424	M6V M6V
Alula	0308	BAA3720-C	NS		Fl Ht	Frozen	Cc	Alula Borealis	K3III
Amaterasu	1501	B685885-D		G	Ht Ga Ri	Temp	Tr	Epsilon Indi	K5V BD BD
Asherah	0303	E766370-D	S	G	Ga Ht Lo Ni	Temp	Un	Beta Canum Venaticorum	G0V
Asura	0908	C798788-D	SR	G	Ag Ht	Temp	Re	VV Canis Minoris	M4V
Azazel	1410	B898951-D	R		Hi Ht In	Cold	Re	HR 1614	K3V
Baba Yaga	1306	C666786-D			Ag Ht Ga	Temp	Rt	Kapteyn's Star	M1VI
Bakunawa	0108	C548470-A		G	Ni	Cold	Cc	20 Leonis Minoris	G3V M6V
Baphomet	1407	B301733-D	S	G	Ht Ic Na Va	Frozen	Re	Stein 2051	M4V
Barnard	1001	B665843-D	NS	G	Ga Ht	Cold	Tr	Barnard's Star	M4V
Bathala	0403	D653342-A		G	Lo Ni Po	Hot	Tr	GL Virginis	M5V
Belobog	1504	A872945-D	N	G	Hi Ht In	Hot	Tr	Tau Ceti	G8V
Beta Comae Berenices	0202	X767000-0			Ba Ga	Temp	Un	Beta Comae Berenices	G0V
Bhadrakali	0304	D663342-A	S	G	Lo Ni	Cold	Tr	61 Ursae Majoris	G8V
Buggane	1405	B400655-D	N		Ht Ni Va	Temp	Rt	Teegarden's Star	M6V
Chiron	0903	A888884-D	NR	G	Ht Ri	Cold	Tr	Alpha Centauri C	G2V K1V M6V
Chukwu	1403	C311643-C		G	Ht Ic Ni	Frozen	Tr	UV Ceti	M5V M6V
Damballa	1503	C630542-B		G	De Ni	Temp	Tr	Groombridge 34	M1V M3V
Domovoi	1205	C000685-B			As Na Ni Va	Cold	Tr	Wolf 359	M6V
Fei Lian	0208	B588740-D	N	G	Ag Ht Ri	Temp	Cc	Pi1 Ursae Majoris	G1V
Fenrir	0808	D310434-D		G	Ht Ni	Temp	Re	Ross 619	M4V
Fujin	1601	D6A0261-A		G	De Lo Ni Va	Cold	Tr	Ross 780	M4V
Gashadokuro	1210	C512458-D	S	G	Ht Ic Ni	Cold	Re	Chi 1 Orionis	G0V M6V
Gliese 432	0103	X510000-0		G	Ba	Cold	Un	Gliese 432	K0V WD
Groombridge 1830	0204	X852000-0			Ba Po	Cold	Un	Groombridge 1830	G8VI
Hachiman	1502	C100642-C	S		Ht Ic Na Ni	Cold	Tr	Ross 248	M6V
Hades	1003	C210342-B			Lo Ni Va	Frozen	Tr	RISC 666	BD
Hanuman	0705	C712462-B	S	G	Ic Ni Po	Cold	Tr	Ross 128	M4V
Jambavan	0605	B6877A9-D	NS		Ag Ht Ga	Temp	Tr	WX Ursae Majoris	M2V M6V
Jikininki	1009	C300559-D		G	Ht Ni Va	Frozen	Re	QY Aurigae	M5V M5V
Jörmungandr	1605	C6A0635-C		G	De Ht Na Ni Va	Cold	Sh	Gliese 832	M1V
Jorōgumo	0608	C400455-D		G	Ht Ni Va C1	Hot	Re	RISC 608	BD
Keid	1507	A855854-D	N	G	Ht Ga Ri	Temp	Rt	Keid	K1V WD M4V
Koschei	0203	C675530-D			Ga Ht Ni	Cold	Un	HR4523	G2V M4V
Kresnik	1603	C400685-C		G	Ht Na Ni Va	Hot	Tr	Van Maanen's Star	WD

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Kurma	0801	C400541-C	S	G	Ht Ni Va	Temp	Tr	WISE 0855-0714	BD
Lamia	0708	C866755-D			Ag Ht Ri	Cold	Re	RISC 708	K4V M3V
Lindworm	0408	C100600-A		G	Ni Va	Temp	Cc	Gliese 357	K0V WD
Mehen	1505	B666736-D	NS	G	Ag Ga Ht	Temp	Sh	Epsilon Eridani	K2V
Muma Pădurii	0910	D511563-D		G	Ht Ic Na Ni Va H1	Frozen	Re	Gliese 293	WD
Naga	0310	B000770-D	N		As Ht Va	Temp	Cc	RISC 310	K1V
Onibaba	1206	C200466-D		G	Ht Ni Va	Frozen	Rt	Luyten's Star	M3V
Parvati	0405	D400485-A		G	Ni Va	Temp	Tr	Gliese 408	M3V
Patasola	1310	C553699-D			Ht Ni Po	Cold	Re	Gamma Leporis	F6V
Penghou	0803	D830485-A		G	De Ni	Boiling	Tr	Luhman 16	BD BD
Poludnitsa	1509	B655798-D	N	G	Ag Ht Ga	Hot	Re	Pi3 Orionis	F6V
Procyon	1107	B644955-D	N	G	Hi Ht In H1	Hot	Rt	Procyon	F5VI WD
Qandiša	1308	D300311-D		G	Ht Lo Ni Va	Frozen	Re	Luyten 1723	M4V
Rakshasa	1008	B651552-D	N	G	Ht Ni Po	Cold	Re	Wolf 294	M4V
Rana	1607	A89A98A-D	NS	G	Hi Ht In Wa	Temp	Re	Rana	K0IV
RISC 106	0106	X500000-0		G	Ba Va	Temp	Un	RISC 106	M4V
Rudra	0406	C8B2521-C	S	G	Fl Ht Ni C3	Boiling	Tr	Wolf 359	M6V
Sasquatch	0510	C543688-D	S	G	Ht Ni Po C1	Cold	Re	RISC 510	K4V
Selket	0707	B000410-D		G	As Ht Ni Va	Temp	Tr	EI Canceri	M5V
Semargl	0501	D810200-A	S		Lo Ni Va	Temp	Tr	Wolf 498	M1V
Sirius	1106	B100566-D	NS		Ht Ni Va	Boiling	Tr	Sirius	A1V WD
Svarog	1006	B410666-D	N		Ht Na Ni Va	Hot	Tr	DX Cancri	M6V
Tanuki	0804	B610643-C		G	Na Ni Va	Temp	Tr	Lalande 21185	M2V
Terra	1103	A877946-D	NSR	G	Hi Ht In	Temp	Tr	Sol	G2V
Vamana	0706	C100463-A		G	Ni Va	Temp	Tr	AD Leonis	M3V
Vishnu	1303	C200588-D	S		Ht Ni Va	Frozen	Tr	RISC 303	BD
Vritra	1610	C401356-D		G	Ht Ic Lo Ni Va, H1	Frozen	Re	RISC 610	BD
Wendigo	0609	D411513-D		G	Ht Ic Ni	Cold	Re	RISC 609	M1V
Wormwood	0607	D653641-A	S		Ni Po R2	Cold	Tr	ADS 7251	M0V K7V
Zahhak	0309	C500300-A		G	Lo Ni Va	Hot	Cc	11 Leonis Minoris	G8V M5V

Allegiance Codes:

Ph = Phnunk

Cc = Cicek Confederation

In = Independent

Re = Reticulan Empire

Rt = Reticulan Technate

Sh – Ssesslessian Harmony

Tr = United Terran Republic

Un = Unclaimed

Ck = Chiwak

FK = Fanja Kanja

Kx = Klax

Minority Populations

Most settled worlds on the Terran Borderlands are settled by a single species, assumed to be the race that controls that region of space. However, some worlds have significant minority populations of another species. In the Terran Borderlands, the most common reason for these minorities is as a result of worlds changing hands in the recent Terran Liberation War; although economic reasons may also cause a world to be settled by several different races.

To show those worlds that have minor populations, a new code is introduced into the Trade Code section of the world information tables. The code is a single letter, representing the species, and a number from 1-9 representing what percentage of the worlds' population (multiplied by a factor of 10) is this minority population. For example, Procyon has the new code H1 – this means that 10% of the population of Procyon is Human, rather than Reticulan. It is possible for worlds to have multiple minority populations over 10%, but none currently exist within the Terran Borderlands.

The following species codes are used to represent the various races:

C = Cicek

H = Human (Terran)

R = Reticulan

S = Ssesslessian

W = Chiwak

Z = Zhuzzh

K = Klax

F = Kanja Kanja

P = Phnunk

X = Native population

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Chapter 6 - Patrons



Mahinder Patel, Colonial Settlement Liason Agent

Mr. Patel represents the Beta Comae Berenices Company, a private venture that has staked a handful of small claims on the “jackpot” planet in the Beta Comae Berenices system for the sake of later colonization.

Skills and Equipment Required: A starship with a sizeable cargo hold, Survival, Navigation, Pilot, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Comms skills.

Description: Patel needs to hire and retain the services of a group of individuals to help facilitate the quick, orderly, and profitable colonization of BCB. The group must have access to a starship to be able to conduct supply runs when necessary, and to allow rapid transport around the planet. Specifically, Patel needs the following things done:

1. A detailed survey of three prospective settlement sites.
2. The establishment of a security perimeter around the site chosen for initial colonization.
3. Biological compatibility testing of the local flora and fauna.
4. Mineral surveys for mining operations, or other biopharmacological exploitation for cash.
5. Hauling supplies and/or colonists when required.

Payment should follow the starship chartering rules (*CE* 110-111). Patel is willing to negotiate, and can offer a six-month contract, with options to renew.

GM Information: Patel is a legitimate agent and the BCB Company is a legitimate and well-funded enterprise—for now. However, the whole thing is a bit ramshackle, and many of the colonists are unprepared for the hardships that will surely follow their arrival on an alien world. PCs who sign up for this job should be in it for the long haul. There will always be *something* Patel needs done, urgently, yesterday. If they can handle whatever comes their way, they’ll be remembered as heroes of the fledgling colony.

Unbeknownst to Patel, there is, in fact, a Zhuzzh subspecies native to Beta Comae Berenices. These survivors from the Precursors’ final war have evolved separately from the “regular” Zhuzzh and are endemic to this world. They have a primitive culture at early TL1 and inhabit all major Precursor sites across this world. They worship the Precursors as gods. Some of their ruin-city-states might be willing to trade, while others will try to sacrifice the alien Terrans to their long-dead gods.

These Stars Are Ours!

Complications:

1. Primitive local Zhuzzh launch a surprise raid against the nascent Terran colony.
2. A hungry pack of carnivorous predators, surprise surveyors, or settlers.
3. The most recent colonists to arrive are woefully underprepared for the endeavor and will need a great deal of handholding and handling if they are going to survive.
4. A colonist is not what he or she appears to be: an undercover UTR government agent, corporate operative, a saboteur from a rival colonization project, or just a drifter looking to disappear.
5. Pirate raiders from nearby Koschei arrive in-system and demand their cut of the mining revenues, colonial supplies, or even some slaves.
6. The UTR government intervenes on this valuable prospective colony world. How will the PCs and the colonists respond to this massive governmental encroachment?

These Stars Are Ours!

First Tier Proregina “Emily”, Reticulan Consul at Wormwood

Emily—her real name being complicated for human pronunciation—is a minor diplomat on the Terran border-world of Wormwood. She needs a sensitive data packet couriered to the Reticulan Imperial Ambassador on Terra. It is confidential, it needs expediting, and her usual means of transit are unavailable. Oh, and “Emily” will be accompanying the data packet.

Skills and Equipment Required: Starship with Jump-2 drive at least, Liaison, Steward, Gun Combat.

Description: Emily, accompanied by her security Huscarls, approaches The PCs and offers the job. The sense of urgency conveyed in the job offer is palpable, which, given how unemotional Reticulans usually are, should clue the players into the money involved. The Reticulan Consul on Wormwood will pay to charter the PCs’ ship, and will be accompanying them, along with a data packet that is roughly the size of a briefcase. From Wormwood, it should take the PCs four jumps at jump-2 to arrive at Terra. They’d be losing out on trading opportunities, but it’s easy money.

GM Information: This adventure is less about the courier job itself and more about the roleplaying opportunities to interact with a minor diplomat of the Reticulan Empire. Naturally, First Tier Preceptor “Emily” is a difficult passenger to accommodate. She will be cold, blunt, and unsympathetic in every interaction. But her money spends just as well as any other paying customer, right? What’s worse, Emily gained her Gentry-level position through her wartime activities in service of the Reticulan Empire. She was in the thick of the fighting on Belobog, or Keid, or wherever any of the PCs may have served. Her reputation as a ruthless, cold, and callous field commander made her the stuff of dark legends among Terran combatants. In the Reticulan Empire, she has made a name for herself with her sterling 89% Imperial Efficiency Score—it is unheard of for anyone from the Gentry or Commoner classes to attain a ranking higher than a 75% at the best of times.

Complications:

1. Emily is acting as a spy, and her data packet contains classified information for the Reticulan Imperial Ambassador on Terra. CRC-8 counter-espionage black-ops units will attempt to intercept the PCs ship on at least two occasions over the four-jump trip. They will be careful to not permanently injure a Reticulan diplomat, but less stringent rules of engagement will apply to independent contractors.
2. Emily is a double agent, working for CRC-16. The data packet is meant for the Ambassador, but contains false information. Mercenaries in the employ of the Reticulan Empire will attempt to intercept and capture Emily. Her couriers are of little concern.
3. The PCs are not couriers hired by Emily, but are instead pirates or other criminals who have captured her or her data packet, and discover classified intelligence not meant for them.
4. The PCs conflict with Consortium jump-cussers operating in the area.
5. A distress call in deep space requires that the PCs divert to investigate and mount a rescue operation. Emily absolutely refuses to allow the ship to divert course.
6. A freak accident on board the PCs’ ship causes Emily’s death. Documentary proof of her hiring the PCs might not be easy to locate or forge.

These Stars Are Ours!

Bernard Ross, Collaborator Hunter

Felipe Lebedev is well-known EFA war criminal and Reticulan collaborator. Ross has spent the better part of three years locating him. Ross needs the PCs to abduct him and bring him to Terra to stand trial.

Skills and Equipment Required: Recon, Liaison, Streetwise, Gun Combat, Vehicle Skills. A starship is not necessary, but Ross will only pay the PCs for the abduction and Lebedev's extraction to a ship. The PCs must handle their own extraction in that case.

Description: Lebedev is living a quiet, idyllic life on Jambavan, far from the scene of his wartime crimes. The PCs must arrive inconspicuously, locate Lebedev (the information provided by Ross is accurate), and confirm the target. They must then abduct Lebedev with zero collateral damage: no one must be killed in this operation. If the PCs have a ship, they are responsible for the captive's transit to Terra for charges. If they don't have a ship, the PCs must get Lebedev to Ross' waiting courier vessel, and then make themselves scarce. Payment will be below average.

GM Information: Lebedev is guilty of collaboration. He was directly responsible for the deaths of hundreds of humans, and indirectly responsible for the deaths of thousands more, all done as an EFA loyalist administrator. However, that was before the War and during the initial insurrection. Now, Lebedev has settled down, married, and lives the quiet life of a country gentleman on his small plot of land outside of startown. He is well-liked by his neighbors, well-known for his generosity and kind disposition, and has provided advice on the day-to-day running of the town. Extracting him from his new community might be very challenging. Fortunately, Lebedev does not expect to be found, and the PCs are not going to be fighting a well-armed killing machine guarded by a small retinue of mercenaries.

Complications:

1. Lebedev still has friends who are politically connected to Jambavan's authoritarian planetary administration. They will complicate matters by directing the local constabulary to intercede on his behalf. Ross stipulated that no one is to be killed, remember.
2. Lebedev has a couple of cybernetic implants, including a toxin filter which makes attempts to drug him ineffective.
3. Lebedev is a bad, bad man who has done bad, bad things. However, he has verifiable information on even worse EFA collaborators who have done worse things. He's willing to give up his former EFA compatriots in exchange for his freedom and promise to be left alone.
4. The PCs are attempting to kidnap a well-armed killing machine, guarded by a small retinue of mercenaries.
5. Lebedev is innocent, and can prove it!
6. Reticulans from the Empire arrive to assassinate Lebedev. They were looking for him too, as he has knowledge of things that no human should know.

Grrtrhd, Zhuzzh Salvage Operator

This independent salvage operator usually goes by “Gertrude”, as her Zhuzzh name is nearly unpronounceable by human “vocal orifices”—as she calls them. She is looking for a group of hardy space salvagers for a major operation.

Equipment and Skills Required: Engineering, Mechanics, Electronics, Zero-G, other Technical skills an asset. A starship or other small craft will be an asset, but not absolutely necessary.

Description: “Gertrude”’s operation on Buggane has hit a snag. Her last crew was imprisoned by Reticulan Technate authorities on charges of illegal salvage and black marketeering. She needs a new crew to crack open and investigate a supply depot rumored to be buried in an asteroid in the Buggane system. She will pay 15% of the value of all salvage recovered, 20% if the PCs bring their own ship.

GM Information: “Gertrude” has found the location of a “lost” Technate insurgent supply depot from the War. These depots in Buggane were instrumental in aiding the rebels hold out against the Reticulan Empire until the UTR could liberate the system. The Technate claims all materiel found in these depots as its rightful property but acknowledges that salvage operators are often indispensable in locating caches. This is a meritocracy, after all. “Gertrude” is not satisfied with the 25% commission she would receive for turning in these lost Technate supplies to their rightful owners, and is skirting the law in the hopes of making a major score. If the Buggane authorities detect or catch the PCs, she will leave them high and dry.

Complications:

1. Precursor artifacts in the bunker have not yet attracted the attention of the Technate, but other Zhuzzh salvagers might be close by to jump on the PCs after they’ve made the initial entry.
2. The bunker has automated defense systems, warbots, and other traps.
3. The bunker has *live* defense systems in the form of Reticulan Technocratic rebels who were kept in low-berth during the War.
4. The supply cache is a treasure-trove of supplies. Unfortunately, it is also a Reticulan Technate space police sting, who are using the base to catch illegal salvage operations.
5. The cache contains the location of an even bigger score. Do the PCs find the map before “Gertrude”? What do they do with it?
6. The supply cache contains weapons of mass destruction.

These Stars Are Ours!

Ten-Petal Flower, Cicek Corporate Agent

This industrious Cicek female needs a group of agents for a covert operation. Most importantly, no glory-hungry Cicek males allowed! The whole matter is sensitive and discretion is of the utmost importance.

Skills and Equipment Required: Recon, Electronics, Computer, Liaison. Breaking and entering equipment, surveillance equipment, and extraction transport.

Description: This is a classic industrial espionage job. The employer would like the PCs to infiltrate a remote computer research facility on Keid and steal plans for an advanced artificial intelligence architecture. This is a *highly illegal* operation and the Cicek males who would usually perform commando operations are of no use here. They would receive no public recognition of their actions, and thus, no Glory. Payment, however, will be very lucrative.

GM Information: Ten-Petal Flower is reluctant to use human operatives but the PCs come highly recommended and time is of the essence. This should be a perilous and difficult operation. The PCs are going to the capital of the Reticulan Technate to commit industrial espionage for a non-human corporation. They will have no support, no insertion, and no extraction other than their own. Depending on how the players feel, the fact that the research facility is not located in a dense population center might be advantageous. The facility is small, but very secure, and an on-site armed security force of mercenaries and security-bots with lethal and non-lethal armaments. The AI architecture (not the core itself) is easy to copy over to a data disk, though this will take time. The GM should feel free to make this job the apex of a special operations campaign. If the PCs pull this off, word will get around and they will become legends in the shady world of interstellar covert operations.

Complications: As if this job won't be complicated enough!

1. A rival corporate team is working on the same job! They will be carrying out a much less subtle attack on the facility, disguising it as the work of Terran terrorists.
2. Security is tighter than anticipated.
3. A group of Cicek males have somehow gotten wind of the PCs' operation and have decided to interfere to attain Glory.
4. The target data was moved and the PCs will need to do extra legwork to get paid.
5. The AI is active and will cause the PCs headaches as it notices that its architecture is being copied ("I am sorry, I cannot let you do that").
6. The entire operation is an exercise designed to test the facility's security measures. The PCs will be paid accordingly, but killing will be strictly forbidden from the outset.

These Stars Are Ours!

Dr. Reza Perry, Terran xeno-archaeologist

A Precursor site within UTR territory has been discovered and needs exploring!

Skills and Equipment Required: Navigation, Linguistics, Liaison, Social Sciences, Recon, Survival. Equipment here should include 3.048m poles, astronaut rations, and at least one portable light source.

Description: A Precursor complex has been stumbled upon and the patron needs some hardy and relatively knowledgeable individuals to go exploring. Payment will be Cr2000 per person, plus another Cr3000 upon successful return with maps. No artifacts are to be removed. Nothing is to be disturbed! Dr. Perry will be leading the expedition.

GM Information: Dr. Perry is hoping to find linguistic information that will help decipher writing found at other Preceptor sites. This site can be anything an enterprising Referee likes, though care must be taken to avoid turning this adventure into a straight dungeon-crawl. The stranger machinery of unknown function, bizarre phenomena, and inhuman weirdness, that the players encounter, the better.

Complications:

1. Rival xeno-archaeologists with fewer scruples about leaving Precursor sites untouched arrive—with armed goons.
2. Automated TL16 defense systems activate.
3. An earthquake strikes while the expedition is underground. They must find alternate exits. The exploration phase is now over; it's all about survival now.
4. Some ancient, long-lived, non-sentient creatures have made this place their nest. The disturbance does not please them.
5. As #4 above, but this is in fact a secret Reticulan Empire listening post deep in UTR territory.
6. There is a strange psionic or temporal phenomenon here which will drastically alter the lives of anyone who interacts with it (like a particularly foolhardy PC).

These Stars Are Ours!

Barigo Reener, Casino Operator

Mr. Reener requires the services of a special security details for a very large and well-publicized poker tournament that will be taking place on his private star-liner, the *SS Escape*.

Skills and Equipment Required: Recon, Liaison, Carousing, Gambling, Gun Combat, Melee, Steward, Streetwise. Equipment: None required, though Reener will want any equipment he lends the PCs to be returned in the condition they found it in.

Description: “The Great Escape” Poker Tournament is a week-long affair, and the first of a major series of publicity events that Barigo Reener is involved in. The security requirements for an event of this magnitude—approximately 200 players, plus their entourages—are enormous. The PCs will be members of the elite security detail, tasked with handling VIPs discreetly, monitoring the ship for any major potential problems, and ensuring the security of the MCr5 grand prize. The pay is high here: Cr25000 per Adventurer, and the opportunity to make all sorts of high-level contacts.

GM Information: It is a practical certainty that criminals will be drawn to this event. The PCs won’t have to worry about petty thievery, con artists, or the usual grifters and layabouts. Their job is to ensure that the VIPs are well-looked after, secure, and properly corralled when their over-indulgences get the better of them. Minor celebrities and even a couple of major ones will be on hand to indulge in their gambling fantasies. While photojournalists are expressly forbidden from entry (Reener has hired a very discreet photography service instead), all sorts of shenanigans will occur that will take up most the PCs’ time.

Of course, there is a plot to steal the MCr5 grand prize from the ship. A group of highly professional criminals will make the attempt. How they do it is up to the GM, but should lean towards non-violent, highly spectacular heists.

Complications:

1. The PCs are not security. They’ve entered the tournament, and they’ll have to help security stop the thieves when the heist goes down.
2. The heist involves selective use of the *SS Escape*’s gravitics.
3. Pirates attack the liner as it makes its cruise. They may even know that the ship is carrying MCr5 in untraceable bearer bonds! The pirate captain might even like poker...
4. The PCs must avoid the romantic overtures of several individuals.
5. The whole event is being used as cover for an elaborate sting operation by the Terran Interstellar Police to catch a notorious group of thieves.
6. The *Escape*’s journey involves a jump at the end of the tournament. A mis-jump occurs. As security, the PCs are now responsible for the well-being of the passengers, and everyone’s survival.

These Stars Are Ours!

Isaac “Shiny” Murray, Consortium Fixer

The Consortium always has use of independent operators to perform tasks of varying, and almost always dubious, legality. “Shiny” is a mid-level Consortium operator, and a likeable enough fellow who just so happens to take a *shine* towards the PCs when they need a job.

Skills and Equipment Required: Varies, but the PCs will be on Shiny’s priority go-to list if they have a fast, non-descript starship, and can talk their way past UTR customs inspectors.

Description: A typical “Shiny” job: pick up a cargo of *misplaced* Viriditas Incorporated agricultural implements that were originally intended for a new colony on, well, it doesn’t matter. What matters is that Shiny needs the cargo moved to another world, for whatever reasons dictated by black/grey market supply and demand realities.

GM Information: This sort of adventure is just a broad palette for anything *else* to happen. It is recommended that the Complications listed below are used sparingly in a given campaign, lest the players become reluctant to take no-questions-asked jobs from the space-mob. However, Shiny himself is a good source of information and jobs, so having him as a connection will undoubtedly be useful to most groups of PCs.

Complications:

1. Shiny’s been compromised, and the operation is a set-up for the Terran Interstellar Police to make arrests.
2. Hidden in the cargo—unknownst to Shiny, of course! - is something much nastier than grey-market farming implements: banned weapons, drugs, or even slaves in self-contained low berth pods.
3. Pirates. Why did it have to be pirates?
4. The UTR customs officials are being particularly fastidious for some reason. They are going to conduct a full inspection of the PCs’ cargo and hold. Perhaps a bribe might be useful here.
5. Another criminal wants to take delivery of the goods, and will send his goons to appropriate the cargo from the PCs at gunpoint.
6. Shiny seems a little more nervous about this job than usual. That’s because it’s a CRC-8—or worse, a CRC-32—covert operation. The PCs might stumble upon something in the transport or delivery of the cargo that they simply were not meant to know.

These Stars Are Ours!

Marian Kelvin, Corporate Sommelier

Ms. Kelvin works for one of the big corporations, such as the Durnhal Bank, or Cikavac, for example. However, her job is particularly fine-tuned: she is a sommelier for a high-ranking executive. She needs the PCs to attend an auction, purchase a particularly valuable bottle of wine, and return it to her.

Skills and Equipment Required: Liaison, Broker, Carousing, Bribery. Equipment requirements are minimal. The PCs should have good suits and eveningwear.

Description: The PCs must attend the auction, bid, and successfully purchase the bottle. The integrity of the auction itself must be maintained. However, the PCs can use clandestine means to influence the bidding prior to the event. Outright theft is not allowed. Ms. Kelvin will not serve her employer wine “tainted” by petty criminal activity. The wine predates the EFA occupation, and is perfect. Payment will be high, Cr10000 per person, and the PCs are given a firm budget of KCr200.

GM Information: This job is one of those opportunities for the GM to broaden the scope of the campaign setting: the auction can take place on an exclusive orbital station, or in a remote villa high in the mountains of an alien world. Or it could take place at Sotheby’s in London, with the rain pouring down outside. The other bidders can represent a cross-section of society that many PCs will not usually encounter, and this can open opportunities for other adventures in a different vein in the future.

Complications:

1. Another bidder is acting as spoiler, deliberately raising the price of the bottle. To what end?
2. A radical terrorist organization attacks the location of the auction, hoping to draw attention to the needless and wasteful opulence, all while creating a delicate hostage situation.
3. The wine bottle is fake. The PCs might be able to find this out beforehand, when one of their underworld contacts lets them in on a little scam they’re pulling.
4. The PCs must drive the price of the bottle up, lose the auction, and then switch out the wine without being detected. That’s the mission.
5. One of the PC’s old enemies is bidding at the auction, or worse, is selling the wine. This will complicate the transaction greatly.
6. After the PCs successfully purchase the wine, another bidder will ruthlessly hunt them down to acquire it.

These Stars Are Ours!

General (Ret.) Cornelis van Horne, UTR Administrator

General (Retired) Van Horne needs the PCs to move a valuable piece of art to his estate on Chiron. The sculpture is a priceless Reticulan work of great religious significance that he claimed as a spoil of war.

Skills and Equipment Required: Pilot, Navigation, Social Science might be useful as well. A starship is required.

Description: The PCs must go to the Sesslessian Harmony capital world of Mehen, and visit a Sesslessian monastery in the highlands there. They will present the head of the monastery with a holographic message from Gen. van Horne. This message should be sufficient to convince the Sesslessian acolytes to part with a sculpture they've been storing for van Horne, who was instrumental in securing and establishing the Sesslessian Harmony during the War as a Terran Army general. The sculpture is 50kg, made of solid stone, and roughly 1m tall. It is quite sturdy and quite old. Payment will be double normal freight rates for a single freight container, per parsec travelled.

GM Information: van Horne is indeed something of a hero on Mehen and the Sesslessians the PCs deal with are honest. The sculpture, however, is a priceless and rare work of Reticulan art: it is one of the oldest known depictions of The Great Engineer in existence. Its existence is known, but its location is not. How van Horne managed to get his hands on it and put it under the protection of Sesslessian monks on Mehen is left to the GM's fertile imagination. Regardless, the PCs will be facing a major problem: the Reticulan Empire would like its statue back. They have sent a group of operatives to track down the Great Engineer and return it to the Imperial Capital. These operatives have been given permission to obtain the Great Engineer by any means necessary, short of murder. Worse still, these operatives have hired a small contingent of Terran *lawyers*. They will intercept the PCs at least once.

Complications:

1. The Sesslessian acolytes are not willing to give up the Great Engineer. This is because they have destroyed the sculpture in a fit of hatred for all things Reticulan.
2. The UTR customs officials who encounter the Great Engineer are on alert for the sculpture. They have orders to seize it and hand it over to the Reticulan Consulate.
3. While on Mehen, the PCs learn that Van Horne was notoriously corrupt. A full list of a dozen other missing artifacts appropriated by Van Horne makes its way into the PCs' hands. Who is Cornelis van Horne, and what was he up to during the war?
4. Reticulan spies are everywhere. The PCs must devise other means of leaving the planet with their Engineer.
5. Van Horne does not hire the PCs. Instead, the Great Engineer is mailed to one of the PCs anonymously. It arrives with a note attached: "the stuff that dreams are made of". Then every unscrupulous, greedy antiquities dealer from Terra to Keid comes out of the woodwork looking for the package.
6. The Reticulans hire the PCs to acquire the Great Engineer while it is in transit to van Horne.

These Stars Are Ours!

“Rebekah”, Reticulan Empire Mercenary Recruiter

Someone in the Reticulan Empire is looking for a group of mercenaries to get a job done: assault and destroy a Chiwak outpost in UTR space. This is a covert operation.

Skills and Equipment Required: Battle Dress, Gun Combat, Demolition skills. Equipment: Guns. Lots and lots of guns. Transport to and from the assault will be provided by independent freighter.

Description: The target outpost is a semi-secret asteroid facility on the Terran Borderlands. Ostensibly an inoffensive consulate for the Chiwak to maintain some informal ties with the UTR, the facility is also a listening post and a center for anti-Imperial espionage activities. The Reticulans have learned of its existence and would like it destroyed by humans in what should look like a pirate attack. No survivors are to remain, and no prisoners are to be taken. The entire facility should be destroyed. This is hardly standard pirate MO, but “Rebekah” is paying Cr5000 up front, and another Cr10000 upon successful completion of the job.

GM Information: The Reticulan Empire is known for using alien auxiliary troops, and this practice continues even after the Terran Liberation War. As humiliating as the defeat in that War was, the UTR does not pose the same threat as the Chiwak Holy Dominion does, further to Trailing of the Reticulan Empire. The Chiwak are not currently attacking the Reticulan Empire, although they are beginning to reassess their military inaction in the face of the Reticulans’ defeat against the UTR. Now might be the time to strike, and the Chiwak facility has been collating data and sending it back to the Holy Dominion, far to Trailing. The facility is secret, and manned by a mixed group of humans, Cicek and Chiwak. They will put up stiff resistance, but barring any major screw-ups, the PCs should be able to erase the place off the asteroid it is built upon.

Complications:

1. There are civilians present at the facility! They need to be killed too. “Rebekah” is adamant that no one is to survive the assault.
2. The facility has a very dangerous, though small, Chiwak trooper detachment present.
3. The PCs are deemed expendable by their employer. “Rebekah” did say that *no one* is to survive the assault, after all. A mop-up team will be along shortly after the place is secured to finish the job.
4. The PCs are captured by the Chiwak!
5. The base is a research station for Chiwak WMDs, with covert Terran and Technate collaboration, no less, and there are Reticulan Technate liaison officers present.
6. The base is an outpost of the Reticulan Empire. The raid is part of some bloody internecine struggle between two Reticulan Great Houses.

These Stars Are Ours!

Patrice Baker, Celebrity

Ms. Baker has a problem. Her yacht, the *Celestial*, is missing. She'd like the PCs to retrieve it for her.

Skills and Equipment Required: Liaison, Pilot, Navigation, Sensors, Gun Combat. The PCs should probably have their own starship, unless they have other ideas regarding how to find the *Celestial*.

Description: The *Celestial*, a 200-ton yacht of recent manufacture, was in orbit over Baker's planetary estate on Amaterasu. Then it was not. System traffic is light and starport control received authentic clearance codes to leave orbit. It has been only two days. The PCs will receive a full run-down of the schematics and capabilities of the vessel. It has only Jump-1 capabilities, which means it cannot have gotten too far by interstellar standards. The ship is to be commandeered and returned to its rightful owner. Minor damage to internal systems is understandable, but serious structural damage will be paid for out of the PCs' pockets. Payment is MCr2 upon successful return of the ship. Ms. Baker would normally pay something up front, but she is feeling particularly antagonistic towards everyone, given that her yacht was stolen.

GM Information: The *Celestial* is indeed missing, but was not exactly stolen. It's been "borrowed" as part of a domestic dispute. The culprit is Patrice Baker's jilted long-term boyfriend, Michael Penrose. The former Patrice's refusal has increasingly upset Terran Navy officer to marry him. She rightfully suspects that Penrose is gold-digging, and has been considering leaving him for some time. The result is that Penrose and some of his former navy friends have commandeered the *Celestial* for a brief "going away cruise", since Penrose knows that his lifestyle on the arm of a very wealthy celebrity is about to end. The PCs will track Penrose and the stolen vessel down quickly enough, and how the return of the *Celestial* is worked out is up to the PCs and their negotiating savvy.

Complications:

1. Penrose was killed defending the ship from actual criminals who commandeered the ship.
2. Baker is lying. The ship was lost in a jump accident with Penrose on board. It looks very suspicious. She is simply covering all her bases as part of the insurance claim.
3. Penrose is operating as a Terran Navy auxiliary, performing a covert operation with sanction from the brass on Terra. Interfering with the operation will not win the PCs any friends in the military.
4. The PCs arrive to discover that actual pirates are attacking the *Celestial*.
5. Baker insists on accompanying the PCs on their mission. She will only take two butlers and minimal baggage with her. Little do they know, she has micro-cameras on her person at all times, and her servants are actually guerrilla film-makers. Ms. Baker will do her best to inject herself into every major decision and every bit of action that may occur. The *Celestial's* theft is real, but she is using the opportunity to generate publicity for a return to show business.
6. The PCs find the *Celestial* adrift and with no one aboard. There are signs of a struggle, but the ship's atmosphere has been vented into space, and its escape pods are still on board. What happened here?

Appendix A

Terran News Agency Dispatches, February 2260

ALULA 25-DEC-59

The Far Trader *TSS Uriah the Hittite*, registered on Jambavan, was reported lost with all hands after an alleged pirate attack while approaching the Alula jump-point. High Port Administrator Kinked Tail expressed sadness over the loss of Terran and Cicek lives but said that it is neither her job, nor that of the Emerald Eyes tribe to police the higher orbits. She further claimed that the pirate ships surely originated from Lindworm, which is beyond Emerald Eyes territory. **JAMBAVAN 5-JAN-60** - Terran Ministry of Colonization and Space Travel officials stressed again that ships going into Cicek space should be ready to defend themselves and carry appropriate weapons.

GASHADOKURO 6-JAN-60

Imperial health officials have expressed concerns regarding the spread of the Blue Fever epidemic among Reticulan refugees from Asura. The refugees, housed in repurposed hangars, complained about overcrowding and inadequate medical resources, but House Thiragin representative Nilrana said that such claims are little more than Technocratic propaganda aimed to foment discontent among the refugees, and that the Terrans, who bombarded Asura, should be blamed for any misfortune the refugees suffer from. **KEID 17-JAN-60** – Sources in the Reticulan Technate said that this is evidence for the illogical, inefficient nature of the Imperial system, especially in comparison to the on-going, successful reconstruction of Technate worlds.

BELOBOG 11-JAN-60

Ministry of Finance director for the Belobog District, Marcella Shimon, announced the Ministry's plan to privatize the Kresnik Mining Concern. No details regarding potential buyers were given but representatives of New Terran Frontiers and Chiang Robotics have expressed keen interest in the offer. Kresnik Miner's Union spokesman, Boris Nakamura told TNA that the Union will cooperate with such a move only if the Ministry will respect the hard work and dedication of the miners, who delivered crucial raw materials to Belobog while under Reticulan bombardment, and vouch for their employment security.

JORMUNGANDR 12-JAN-60

A malfunctioning mining robot killed six Ssesslessian miners and a Terran engineer and wounded twenty-two additional miners in a freak accident in a lanthanum mine near the southern pole of Jörmungandr. Ssesslessian Harmony security troops destroyed the robot and thus saved the lives of over a hundred additional miners and engineers. The mine's chief foreman announced that a software glitch caused the robot to attack miners with its laser drills. However, anonymous sources in Jörmungandr's government disclosed to TNA that they strongly suspect malicious software left behind by the Reticulans when they evacuated the world in 2244.

MARS 1-FEB-60

Unstable weather continues in Syrtis Major Planum and Terran authorities have evacuated six more settlements due to flash flooding. The Mars Planetary Meteorological Service cited the effects of the current stage of terraformation as the reason for the heavy rains and stormy weather over this region. **MARS 2-FEB-60** – The Mars Xenoarcheological Society announced the discovery of alien ruins exposed by the flash floods in Syrtis. They told TNA that the working hypothesis is that these are of Precursor origin, though they have not ruled out a later Reticulan construction. The Society has postponed further investigation until the weather stabilizes enough to allow safe excavation.

Appendix B

Sources of Inspiration, Literary and Otherwise

No work of science fiction exists in vacuum. Many works of art and human creation – literature, film, television programs and video games, among others – inspired the writing of this book. They may also serve the player and Referee as excellent sources of inspiration for their games. Therefore, we provide a short list of such sources of inspiration for your reading, viewing and playing pleasure – as well as for inspiration for your own games.

Literature

Heinlein, Robert – Starship Troopers
 Longyear, Barry B. – Enemy Mine
 Niven, Larry – Known Space stories such as A Gift from Earth, Ringworld and the Man-Kzin Wars
 Robinson, Kim Stanley - Mars Trilogy (Red Mars, Green Mars, Blue Mars)
 Scalzi, John – Old Man’s War
 Silverberg, Robert – Across a Billion Years
 Simmons, Dan – Hyperion Cantos
 Strugatsky, Arkady and Boris – Roadside Picnic

Film

Alien and its sequels
 Enemy Mine
 Outland
 Serenity

Television

Andromeda
 Babylon 5
 Dark Skies
 Earth: Final Conflict
 Firefly
 Space: Above and Beyond

Video Games

Dead Space Trilogy
 Elite and its sequels Elite: Frontier, Frontier: First Encounters and Elite: Dangerous
 FTL: Faster Than Light
 Mass Effect Trilogy
 Red Faction and Red Faction: Guerrilla
 S.T.A.L.K.E.R: Shadows of Chernobyl and its sequels, Clear Sky and Call of Pripjat
 Star Control 2 and its free remake, The Ur-Quan Masters
 Starflight and its sequel, Starflight 2
 System Shock and its sequel, System Shock 2
 UFO: Aftermath
 Wing Commander and its various sequels
 X-Com: UFO Defense (also known as UFO: Enemy Unknown), and its modern remake XCOM: Enemy Unknown – and their sequel, XCOM 2
 Xenonauts

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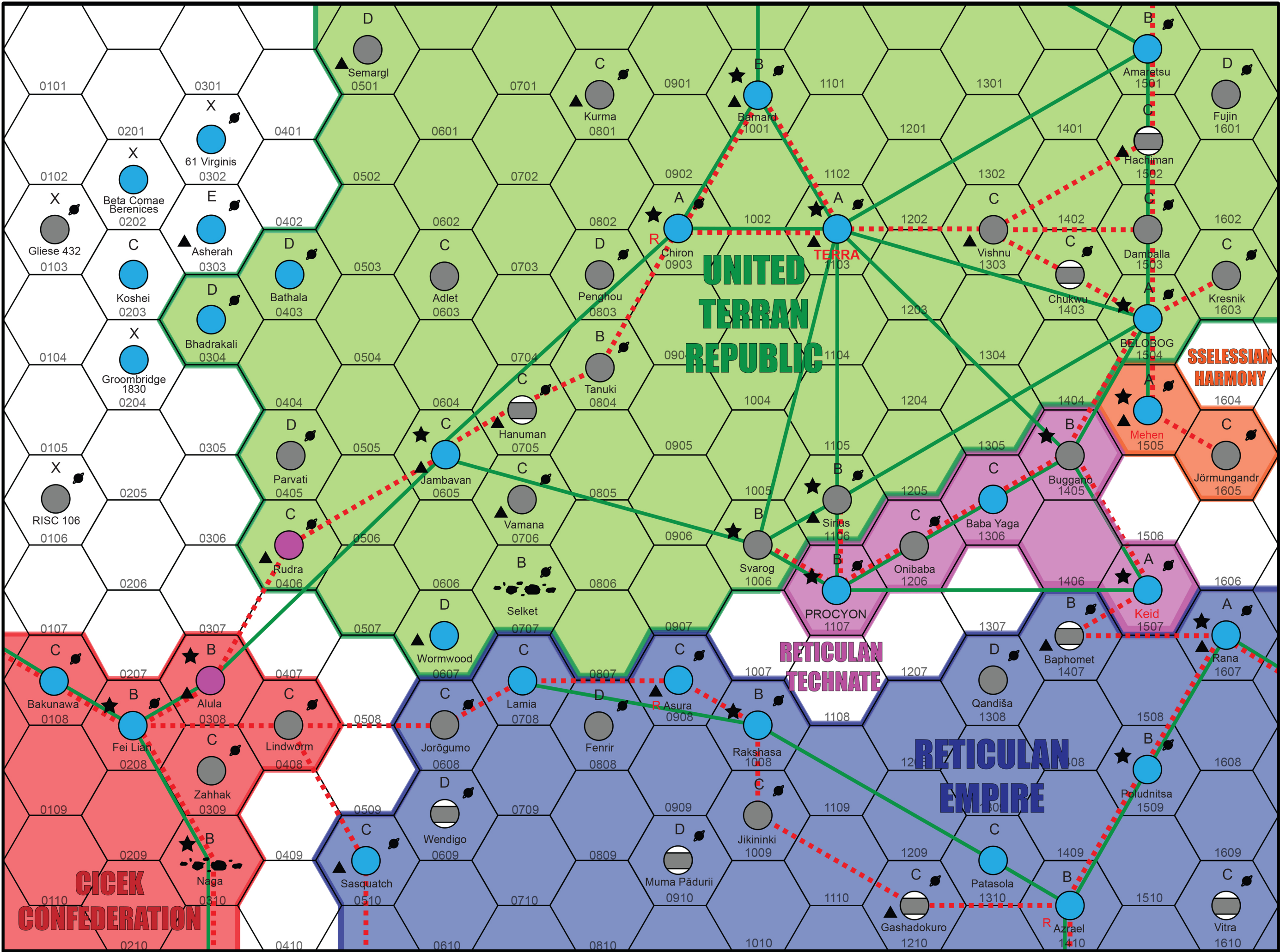
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KEY

- Starport Type
- Mainworld Type
- Mainworld Name
- Hex Number
- 1 Hex = 1 Parsec
- Water Present
- No Water Present
- Ice Cap World
- Fluid Oceans
- Asteroid Belt
- Gas Giant Present
- Naval Base
- Scout Base
- Research Base
- Trade Route
- Communication Route

THESE STARS ARE OURS!

These Stars Are Ours is a space-opera setting for the Cepheus Engine Core Rules. Set in 2260 AD - two years after the Terrans took Keid and forced the Reticulan Empire to capitulate - it introduces the player characters to the immediate aftermath of the Terran victory in the Terran Liberation War against the mighty Reticulan Empire and its many thralls. For their part, the upstart Terrans, bolstered by their victory against their old masters, now move to become a power to be reckoned with in interstellar affairs. Against this background of espionage, maneuvering and saber-rattling, and on the new interstellar frontiers, the player characters can forge a destiny of heroes or villains of the new United Terran Republic. The book provides all the astrography and background necessary to set a sci-fi campaign in the exciting times of the 23rd century.

This book contains:

- History and background material for 23rd century Terra and the larger universe.
- Corporations, political parties, and illegal groups – both Terran and alien.
- 4 major alien species and several minor ones – all detailed.
- Rules for generating and playing characters from 6 alien species.
- 7 alien careers and 12 Terran ones.
- Advanced character generation rules and event tables for all included careers.
- Rules for cybernetic augmentation, body modification, and cyborg conversion.
- 2 small craft and 5 starships with full game statistics and high-res deck plans.
- The Terran Borderlands including 64 detailed worlds and a high-res star map.
- 12 Patrons offering adventurous missions to the players' characters.

Note that this book provides character generations, biological and cultural background, and flying saucers (!) for playing Grey Aliens from Zeta 2 Reticuli , ready to drop into any Cepheus Engine campaign!



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