

FREEDOM IN THE GALAXY

GALACTIC GUIDE

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I. Moments in the Galaxy

Galaxies dot the universe like grains of spiraled sand; some host beauty and life, others strife and unrest. In one, the sentient races of the Order of Beings have endured the absolute and oppressive rule of the Eternal Empire for centuries. The cruel yoke of the Empire stretches from star to star, encompassing every known race of that troubled galaxy within its firm grasp. Proud Leonids, quick-witted Saurians, even the Piorad space raiders are forced to bow to the self-named Eternals. All pay homage — and heavy taxes — to the great and powerful Empire.

The first Emperor, Janis the Lucky, had not planned on founding a dynasty when he left his home planet, frozen and asleep in a slower-than-light Rhone colony ship. When the ship finally touched down, after years of travel, Janis and the others found themselves on the planet Unarpha, under the bright silvery skies of the Ribexian sun. After being met by a native delegation of curious Saurians, the colonists thought to re-enter their cold-pods and find a world completely their own. But the Saurians offered friendship to the Rhones, and invited them to live on Unarpha in biracial peace — a peace that lasted only two short revolutions of Unarpha around Ribex. It was Janis who, engaged in studying a native religion, stumbled onto the secret of the Idol of Unarpha, part of a shrine in the depths of the Unarphan jungle. Janis, a trained physicist, soon divined the true purpose of the small idol — a self-contained faster-than-light drive left behind by the long-defunct *Interstellar Concordance*.

Galactic civilization prior to the Interstellar Concordance was a fleeting, transitory event. The Hyper-dimension, and thus faster-than-light drive, had been discovered but there was no method of faster-than-light communication. The fastest way to send a message was by spaceship, which, due to the untamed currents of Hyper-space, could take months to get to its destination. While individual planets became highly civilized, there was no real galactic community — merely groups of traders, who formed the only means of contact between star systems.

This all changed when the Segundens discovered a new use for the Hyper-dimension; a means of instantaneous interstellar communication, and with it, greater control of the dimension itself. Soon the possibilities for interstellar trade, economic competition, and technological achievement spurred the galaxy's races from their isolationist slumber. With Hyper-space now acting as a vast interstellar highway network, a galactic stock exchange came into being, along with many interstellar businesses and trade ventures. The desire for exploration burned in the minds of peoples who had not built spaceships for thousands of years.

With interstellar commerce came interstellar government. Five hundred years after the Segunden discovery, the Interstellar Concordance (often referred to now as the Golden Age) was formed. Never has a democratic system of such scope existed.

— *All About the Galaxy*
5775, Tamset Univ. Press

The Interspecies Genetics Project was the grand triumph of genetics research. Founded at the height of the Interstellar Concordance by the legendary Doctor Ptolus, its goal was to successfully mix traits of races that had evolved separately. After forty years of experimentation, the Project was an unqualified success. It was found that Rhone genetic structure had a peculiar relationship with the genetic structures of almost all the other races in the Concordance; with a little prodding, the genes of Rhones could unite with genes of the other races to produce healthy, viable offspring.

These hybrid races had all the essential qualities of their parent race, but the addition of the Rhonish genetic material made them all bipedal, with two arms, and capable of breathing a nitrogen/oxygen atmosphere in addition to the atmospheric mixture of the parent race.... The Segunden and Piorad hybrids came to look so like the Rhones that for a time the Interspecies Genetics Project was accused of substituting Rhone fetuses in the experiment, but this was disproven after analysis by independent observers.

A look at the parent Saurian race and the hybrid Rhone/Saurian race gives a good example of what radical changes had been made. The parent Saurians had eight limbs, a large underslung jaw, and foot-long fangs characteristic of the reptilian phylum. The hybrids were erect bipeds, with an anatomical structure that was identical to the Rhones' except for the head, which retained its reptilian features with the fangs sizably reduced.

— *Genetics of the Golden Age*
5759, Adare Digest, Vol. XI, Nr. 3

As the Genetics Project produced ever greater numbers of hybrids, they left their breeding grounds and traveled to the worlds of their respective parent races. They were not met with the acceptance they hoped to find. While a few parent races accepted their new relatives calmly, others thought the hybrids ugly, repulsive travesties. Most of the hybrids found themselves restricted to tiny areas, cut off from the outside world.

But the hybrids had the same vigor and the will to live that the Rhones possessed. They tended to breed prodigiously despite their cramped relocation camps. Soon they could not be contained, and began taking what they thought was rightfully theirs, if it was not being provided... thus began the Galactic Extermination

Wars. The hybrids and the elder races battled with one another, each growing to hate the other more as time went on. It was not an interstellar war, but a simultaneous civil war on almost every planet in the Concordance.

The Rhones were not immune to the consequences of the Wars. It was a foregone conclusion that the highly adaptable hybrid races would win their struggles and become the new race of Segundens, Saurians, Suvans, and so forth. But as each race established its dominance, it laid the blame for the cause of the holocaust on the Rhones. Soon the accusation spread across the Concordance that the Rhones, unable to conquer the galaxy by military means, had done so genetically.

The Extermination Wars continued for years of ever increasing destruction, drawing even those who had no complaint or reason to be involved into the conflict. The Interstellar Concordance faltered and fell as all member planets utterly destroyed everything of value and beauty in their fanatical drive for local domination. When it was finally over, the Concordance was already fading to legend, its greatest achievements now mysterious relics. The survivors, mostly hybrids and Rhones, once again lived on planets isolated from one another by the vastness of space.

— *Genetics: Threat or Menace?*
5761, Adare Digest, Vol. XIII, Nr. 18.

Soon enough Janis and his followers had displaced the native priests and had taken the shrine for their own. The Idol of Unarpha proved to be just one of the technological wonders that had lain hidden for so long. To Janis, the use of such gifts seemed quite obvious. He would found an empire, one that would last forever. Janis was never a modest man.

Using the shrine's secrets, it was not long before Janis' ships scattered to the stars; well-armed seeds of Imperial pollination. Most of the races in the budding empire were smart enough not to resist the inevitable. World after world yielded and became subject races in the Eternal Empire.

What had begun as a small cult became a state religion, with Janis at its head. Yet, the true secrets of the shrine on Unarpha and of the idol were never known to more than a handful in all the galaxy.

Janis the Lucky was not an evil man. In fact, the galaxy prospered under his rule as more and more of the ancient secrets were put to practical use. As the faster-than-light drives were self-contained units, and could be tampered with only if one wished to be at the center of a multi-megaton explosion, the races of the galaxy depended on the Eternal Empire not only for governance but for continued communication. Even at the beginning there were grumblings about the Empire's power, the centralization of authority,

and there was even talk against the secrecy of the state religion; but there was no open rebellion.

Six hundred years passed before the Empire began to change, subtly at first and then ever more quickly and violently. Perhaps it was the in-breeding of the Janis dynasty. Then again, as many Rhones who were not lucky enough to have Janis' blood pointed out, "Absolute power and knowledge are their own corruptions."

Taxes were raised. The Imperial elite lived in a truly mind-boggling style, a style difficult for even a galaxy to support. The Imperial navy, called the *Eternal Will*, in the past had been called on only once or twice to put down alien incursions by force. Now the *Eternal Will* was felt as a heavy hand of internal security under many skies. Then came the fearsome arrival of the *Resolution* and the *Planet Stabilizer*, devices whose existence alone was threatening. Technological races that could raise their quota of taxes were allowed to keep some form of their own governments intact. Often their leaders were mere puppets, but at least they were their race's own. Less fortunate races, those who were insufficiently developed and could not meet harsh quotas, had their governments forcibly toppled and taskmaster governments set up in their stead.

Even then things could have changed. All it would have taken was for the galaxy to fall under the sway of a gentle, understanding and empathic Emperor. Instead, the next in line was Coreguya! Emperor Maxtross, who fathered Coreguya, often erred on the side of over-reaction and harsh strength. But his son, Coreguya, was a weak, pitiable creature.

As the galaxy grew increasingly hostile to the Empire, Coreguya turned further away from it all until the cries of dozens of outraged races seemed to him like the whimperings of lower animals. He was the Emperor of the Eternal Empire and, as he often thought under the multi-colored leaves of his garden rest, he was more than just a Rhone, he was little less than a god. He began to delegate more and more of his authority, leaving himself time for godlike enjoyments. If he had chosen the proper individuals to trust, the galaxy might have known peace again. But Coreguya was not a god, nor even a fair judge of character.

In this 500th Year of the Empire, the Order of Imperial Knights is hereby established. Its members shall never falter from their purpose on pain of death; that purpose being to protect the person of the Emperor Eternal, and to protect and preserve the Eternal Empire, and to give life, fortune or honor, if need be, to accomplish these goals.

—Buel Terlif, Most Senior
of the Imperial Knights

Early in Coreguya's reign, the Order of the Imperial Knights, composed of a handful of the Empire's finest soldiers above the authority of even the *Eternal Will*, was placed under the control of one man: Redjac. In his confused state of mind, Coreguya saw viciousness as strength, cunning as wisdom, fanaticism as devotion, and unreasoning wrath a velvet fist in an iron glove. Redjac. The name was whispered in countless languages under the light of a hundred stars. No matter what race, what planet, wherever that name was heard, terror followed.

Though every Imperial starship had a sealed faster-than-light engine (copies of the Unarphan Idol), and often reports had come of fiery death met by hapless souls who tried to open those engines, at last word came that the worst of Coreguya's fears had been realized. Imperial sub-commanders Saytar and Telmen brought news that at least one band of outlaws had found the secret of the drive. As this secret was the catalyst of the Empire's power, the news threw Coreguya into a complete and utter panic, during which he turned to Redjac.

"Loyal one," he addressed Redjac, squinting his regal eyes against the effect of one or another drug, "to you I do bequeath this power." Then, with shaking hands he passed to Redjac his scepter of authority. "Take this, and rid my Empire of these vermin." He fell back into his throne and once more began to hum the Piorad-inspired ballad upon which he was working. Redjac smiled, his black eyes glittered, he bowed and clasped the Imperial symbol close to his sinewy chest. Now, with power over both state and war, Redjac knew himself supreme. He immediately began to seek the traitors who had released the secret information, the holy information, to the rebels. His agents seemed omnipresent.

...The most popular conception people have nowadays of the Galactic Rebellion is that it was indeed galactic in scope. It is a romantic image, of populaces flocking to the Rebel banner, of brave people dying as martyrs so that others could be free, of the daring exploits of people to convince the Empire that they were being cruelly suppressed.

This is false. The vast majority of planets could not produce spaceships that would slow down an Imperial Dreadnought for more than two seconds. Also, most planets were not important to the Empire in any case. The only worlds suppressed were those for which suppression was merely convenient. There were only two dozen systems, some four dozen planets, that really made the difference.

As for the martyrs — despite their brave efforts, only those who knew what they were doing, who had been planning for the Rebellion and had formed a course of action, were of any use in the Rebellion at all. There were only a dozen of these individuals on the Rebel side when the Re-

bellion started, and very few others joined them in the conflict.

My mother was one of those influential people...

...There are those who say that the Empire's defeat was inevitable, and I agree. So why would we have been in such a panic over the Rebellion, why should it dominate our histories and our minds the way it does?

The Imperial arm cracked down hard whenever it could, mostly on those most readily available — the innocent. Every week that the Empire stood inviolate after the Rebellion started meant that millions of people had been executed, or worse. It was the moral responsibility of those who rebelled to assure that it was swift, and that as few as possible felt the unjust lash of Imperial retribution.

To this day, it is scarcely to our credit that so many had to die for freedom, not knowing what they were dying for, or why the Imperial troops destroyed their homes and their loved ones....

—Zina Adora: *A Biography*
By Zan Adora, 5849

The priest Oneste Woada fled his small parish on his home world of Horon. Oneste had believed in the Idol of Unarpha. In fact, he had believed so well, and seemed so loyal, that the higher officials of the church had decided to reveal to him the Truth and assign him to one of the church's research squads. Unfortunately for the Empire, Oneste had always been an honest man; and an honest man who held his own council. When he found that the Unarphan Idol — the center of the religion he had dedicated his life to — was a sham, it tore at his heart, but he hid his feelings under the sound of a lively tongue. When at last he was privy to the final secret — the faster-than-light drive — he decided to start his own reformation.

The precepts of the religion he still felt were good. So, in his priestly fashion, he managed to contact a small band of rebels and to them gave the secret of the drive. In this way, he hoped that the Light of Ribex would truthfully help illumine the darkness. He had hoped to stay on Horon, but as Redjac's agents drew closer, he had no alternative but to flee. The rebels gladly received him, and his good will opened more hearts than the Empire's ever had.

By the time the rebels were almost ready, but for the lack of a decent war fleet. Though they had the galaxy's finest technicians, such as the blue-skinned Yarro Latac, still it would take much work and time for the rebel cause to even approach parity with the Eternal Empire.

Word went forth from star to star. From Zakir to Luine, from Corusa to Rorth; soon every world in the Eternal Empire knew of the rebel dreams. Especially affected were the less technological races who slaved under the Imperial taskmasters. The new Rebels

assembled from every star in the Empire and for every reason, good and bad, that might drive an intelligent creature. Prominent figures of royalty such as Drakir Grebb, Odene Hobar, and Zina Adora allied themselves with the rebels.

Then there was Ly Mantok, a Saurian battlefleet commander who had once been a prospective Imperial Sub-Commander — which led to his personal feud with Sub-Commander Telman. Fearing Mantok, Telman had tried to dispose of him. In a better political position than the Saurian, Telman fabricated charges for which Mantok was tried and then released in disgrace from the service. Before he could be placed under house arrest, Ly Mantok fled with a few loyal aides aboard a small craft, vowing that he would have revenge.

Senator Vudot Vodot became one of the rebels' most outstanding crusaders in the diplomatic arena. Vudot had once been among the most respected of the Imperial Senators, until he had the temerity to crusade on the floor of the Senate for a weakening of the Imperial Knights.

Others, such as Professor Mareg, a botanist, and Doctor Sontag, a physician, fled to the rebels for more intellectual and less physically pressing reasons. Still, their commitment to the cause was no less than others'. For once having declared themselves as rebels, their lives too were on the line.

To aid in his search for the rebel upstarts, Redjac summoned Els Taroff to his side. Taroff, a Rhone from Liomax and an Imperial Knight, was an excellent pilot and totally dedicated to Redjac. Though Redjac was an altogether evil man, he had a mystique about him that often attracted the loyalty of his betters. Redjac chose Els and one other, Jin Voles (a Segunden Imperial Knight), to seek out a rebel stronghold and report back. Redjac knew that if any could carry out the mission, it would be Voles and Taroff.

No sooner had they left his audience chamber than Redjac summoned the head of the Eternal Will, Admiral Barca. The Kayn entered, bowing to Redjac, who in turn introduced Barca to another Knight, Vans Ka-Tie-A. "We have learned," Redjac began, "that Prince Odene Hobar has fled Heliix with a rebel contingent, and others yearn to join him. I have already dispatched two Knights to seek out these criminals; but once a few of them have been hunted down, we should use diplomatic means to learn their intentions."

"Diplomatic?" Barca asked, aghast.

Redjac shrugged. "An opponent who thinks you are negotiating with him will fall all the swifter to your first blow."

"And gentlemen," spoke a soft voice from the doorway, as alluring as it was Imperial, "our blow will be less than gentle!" All turned to regard Thysa Kimbo as she entered the chamber. Illegitimate daughter of Emperor Coreguya, she saw herself as the galaxy's pre-eminent female. Some said that she sought the throne. Even Redjac bowed gallantly to her, his thoughts concealed.

She strolled languorously across the room to a control console and touched a switch-sensor. The ceiling seemed to take on a hemispherical shape, then cleared to an invisible transparency while the room lights dimmed. In holographic wonder, the stars of the Eternal Empire appeared, blazing down on the assembly as if they were all suspended, weightless aboard a glass-hulled starship.

"These are ours," Thysa motioned in a sweeping gesture to the projected stars. "They will remain so. They will be ours eternally!" She looked into Redjac's eyes as she added, "No matter what the cost!" Redjac laughed as the stars above flickered; they seemed to him like candle flames waiting to be snuffed. "Let us," Thysa declared, "plan our total victory."

And there was no longer peace in the galaxy. ■■

II. Star-Faring Races

The eight important races in the galaxy are those that have developed the technology to travel through interplanetary and interstellar space, enabling them to settle worlds other than that on which they evolved. The following entries, describing the general characteristics of each race and providing the players with a list of the planets occupied by each race, are especially useful when implementing the Domino Effect on a planet occupied by one of these races. In each list, the race's home planet appears first, followed by the other planets that the race has colonized.

Kayns. *Home Planet: Mimulus (111); Kalgar (121), Etegr (212), and Niconi (551).*

The Kayns are a humanoid race with dog-like facial features. Steeped in tradition, a Kayn will remain totally loyal to whomever or whatever he has been brought up to serve. Their society is very military in structure and has provided the Empire with many of its best soldiers. Not all Kayns have been raised under the wing of the Empire, however, and many become free-lance mercenaries or bodyguards for any person or cause that inspires their devotion.

Piorads. *Home Planet: Ayod (451); Ownex (141), Lysenda (232), Solvia (432), Cercis (433), and Tartio (442).*

Organized in a hierarchy of tribes, the Piorads have two seemingly opposing racial traits; they originated and still live for the most part in huge, artificial, underground halls, and large segments of the population roam the spaceways, raiding cargo transports and wandering from opportunity to opportunity. They are a wealthy race, loathe to share their riches with other races, yielding just enough to the Empire to avoid retaliation. Piorad star-wanderers are among the galaxy's best spacecraft handlers and fighters.

Rhones. *No Home Planet; Margro (112), Adare (142), Jura (151), Diomas (152), Liomax (161), Orlog (162), Pronox (231), Orning (241), Chim (311), Tsipa (323), Akubera (342), Troliso (411), Lonica (421), Adrax (523), and Trov (542).*

The race from which the founders of the Empire hailed, the Rhones are still the ruling race in the galaxy and the most numerous by far (it was not always thus). With records of mass colonization dating back far before the founding of the current Imperial system, the Rhones' place of origin is not known; although many suggest that they came from a distant corner of the galaxy or another one altogether, long before the Interstellar Concordance was formed.

Saurians. *Home Planet: Unarpha (321); Kalgar (121), Mitrith (143), Jura (151), Icid (163), Quibron (221), Squamot (331), and Kelta (352).*

A reptilian race with humanoid bodies, the Saurians adapt easily to most planet conditions. Before the Empire increased the oppressive nature of its rule, the Saurians governed themselves with a strong parliamentary system that kept good order among their many colonized planets. Strong, stealthy, and intelligent, a Saurian soldier is a welcome addition to any army.

Segundens. *Home Planet: Bajukai (122); Tiglyf (131), Lysenda (232), Lonica (421), and Aras (521).*

The Segundens are a dark-skinned humanoid race possessing great intelligence. Never very interested in quick expansion and conquests, the Segundens have limited their influence to a few planets which they have developed to a technological level far beyond that of most other planets in the galaxy. Although they pay all necessary tributes to the Empire, they have great personal integrity and pride, having made the decision to meet the Empire's demands only after extensive calculations showed that, although they could defeat the Empire in open war, the cost in resources and lives would be even greater than that of peaceful submission.

Suvans. *Home Planet: Mrane (351); Fliad (113), Orning (241), Midest (341), and Akubera (342).*

The Suvans are an amphibious race that thrive in mineral-rich water. They have developed sophisticated techniques for extracting everything imaginable from their life-giving liquid, and, when not wandering through the oceans of the planets they inhabit, they live on wide pavilions constructed just beneath the water's surface. Somewhat adaptable to breathing outside of their natural habitat, many Suvans live in dry cities and towns near the water's edge, although they are much weaker physically out of water.

Xanths. *Home Planet: Xan (513); Mitrith (143), Capilax (522), and Scythia (531).*

The latest addition to the interstellar community are the Xanths, a race possessing incredible strength and viciousness in hot environments. In temperate areas, Xanths are weak and docile; in cold areas, they cannot survive. Technologically behind the other star-faring races, the Xanths have little of worth to surrender to the Empire and thus are little involved in galactic politics.

Yesters. *Home Planet: Cieson (211); Magro (112), Angoff (222), Charkhan (223), Pro-*

nox (231), and Tamset (312).

This bird-like race thrives in the clouds and wind currents of any hydrogen-rich atmosphere. With their high intuitive intelligence and curious nature, they learned the secrets of spaceflight long ago from other races and have colonized the skies of many planets in their beautiful stellar-sail spacecraft. ■■

III. Sovereigns

Ascaill, a Rhone dictator, exerts tyrannical control over the inhabitants of the industrial megalopolis on the planet Pronox. Backed by powerful Imperial support, with which he squeezes profitable production rates out of his Rhone subjects, Ascaill provides the Empire with numerous weapons and communication devices.

Balgar dove into politics on the planet Mrane at a young age and came up a winner, pushing a program of scientific development that saved the Suvans' home world from natural disaster. His department prevented the freezing of much of the planet's habitable water when their sun, Luine, cooled unexpectedly and — luckily — only temporarily. Leading a fleet of Mrane's militia, Balgar directed the artificial heating of critical hydro-areas on the planet and re-ignited the requisite combustion rate on Luine.

Treb Eyro is a charismatic politician, decorated extensively for his services as an Imperial star soldier. After returning to his home planet, Eteg, he quickly captured the loyalty of the Ultracks, a highly advanced race living in the labyrinthine cities there. Commissioner Eyro handles the Ultracks' major industry, synthetic drugs; and controls all traffic, legal and illegal, of these substances. He receives considerable financial reward from the Emperor when the traffic flows toward Orlog.

Xela Grebb is the beloved king of the Calmas, a toad-like race that dwells in the dank, underground caverns of the planet Suti. He, and the Calmas in general, stay out of Imperial politics, content to pay occasional tribute in exchange for subterranean land rights. King Xfela's son, however, *Dra-kir Grebb*, is not so easily appeased, and has run off to join a roving band of Rebels; an action that his father disapproves of strongly, more out of concern for the prince's safety than out of political beliefs.

Odel Hobar, an Imperial loyalist of long standing, is the king of the Leonids, a feline-like race with a strong military society in the jungles of the planet Heliax. The pride of King Odel's army have taken part in the Empire's greatest campaigns, but his son, *Odene Hobar*, who looked to be developing into a fine starsoldier, could not take any more of the Empire's methods of conquest. When his father was unmoved by his pleas for the Rebel cause, Odene fled Heliax in disgust.

Inzenzia III is the head of a theocratic council that governs the deeply ritualistic Jopers on the planet Barak. Inzenzia and his followers secretly oppose the Empire, who at first discouraged, and now openly ban, many Joperian religious customs.

Nam Nhuk once commanded the most feared fleet of Piorad raiders in the galaxy. Finally hunted down and destroyed by the Empire at great expense, Nam Nhuk retreated with a few survivors to the subterranean cities of Ownex, where, under a new guise, he wrested control of the planet from a corrupt Piorad-Imperial puppet and returned the rulership to the resident Piorads. So grateful were the newly freed citizens that they declared Nam Nhuk their leader; an arrangement of the Empire reluctantly agreed to in exchange for a promise from the now-revealed leader that he would never again raid the spaceways.

Tensok Phi singlehandedly founded the newest Segunden colony on Aras when he was but a young explorer and oversaw its development into a prosperous, urbanized society within his lifetime, a feat of technology that holds him forever dear to his fellow colonists. Unconcerned with interstellar affairs, Phi has not openly opposed the Empire, with which he carries on healthy trade, nor has he discredited the Rebels.

Darb Selesh, the warrior king of the Cavalkus, is nonetheless a populist, constantly touring his planet of Anell on gilded wing. The Selesh line has ruled the Cavalkus since the dawn of their recorded history, differentiated from their airborne subjects by the sheen of their golden feathers. Although sympathetic to the rumored plight of those on other planets, the king and his people are much more concerned with battling the local races of semi-intelligent creatures.

Megda Sheels, Queen of Charkhan, rules its native race with an iron will. A strikingly beautiful regent, the amorous legends of her court make up the favorite tales of the Egrix System. For a brief while in her youth, she had but one partner, a Charkhanese noble named *Saytar*. He could not contain her wandering affection, however. Heartbroken, he joined the Imperial military service as a junior officer.

Shirofune, the Grand Prince of the planet Tamset, leads the native race of Kirts. An excellent warrior, Shirofune achieved his local prominence through his prowess in ceremonial combat. Appalled at the Empire's lack of decorum in matters of warfare, Shirofune and his followers will eagerly embrace any honest opposition to the barbaric methods of the Emperor.

Yaldor was recently named by the Theshians on the planet Rhexia as their leader, despite Imperial disapproval. A highly sophisticated and advanced society, the Theshians have provided the Empire with many of its most skilled technicians and scientists. However, the Theshian work force has been reduced to a trickle recently, as their trained professionals (including *Yarro Latac*) have declined, in increasing numbers, to accept assignments at Imperial research and development centers. Yaldor is attempting to lead the Theshians to a totally self-sustained state, within the Imperial sphere of influence. ■■

IV. Creatures

Note: With one exception (the Zop) there is considered to be an inexhaustible supply of each type of creature, and thus another member of the same species is inevitably available to welcome the next unwary character(s) that venture down the wrong path in a future mission. Except where noted otherwise, all combat is hand-to-hand.

Alweg. Public Transport Capsule which suddenly derails. Attacks characters for one round of combat only, at a strength of 8. No break-off.

Arags. Mole people disturbed by passage of characters. Attack with a strength of 4 and endurance of 3.

Batranoban. Pterodactyl-like creature that attacks with a strength of 4 and an endurance of 3. Receives surprise shift of one column on the first round of combat. No break-off on the first round.

Chantenes. Intelligent trees that are quick to anger when stirred. Attacks characters with a strength of 5 and an endurance of 5. Add one to the trees' strength and endurance *each* round of combat (except the first). This addition is cumulative (it represents additional trees waking up). If the trees' endurance is reduced to 0, the combat ends with a character victory.

Chardireeds. Elastic being that can form into many shapes. Attacks with a strength of 4 and endurance of 4. One column shift for surprise on the first round. No break-off on first round.

Chlorofix. Mixed-up Auto-gardener tries to sow characters for the upcoming season. Characters must take time to demonstrate convincingly that they are not seeds or pods. If the mission is eligible for Bonus Draws, subtract one draw.

Crunge. Ordinary-looking rock formation is actually sentient and quite poisonous. Unwary characters sit on it until they realize their discomfort. Subtract the single highest Intelligence rating in the group from 4; the resulting difference is the number of Wounds that *each* character receives.

Derigion. Giant flying lizard with quick movements aided by instinctive precognition. Attacks with a strength of 4 and an endurance of 6. First two hits are subtracted from endurance normally, but do *not* affect the creature's strength.

Dandin. Giant aquatic carnivore attacks with strength of 7 and endurance of 5. Increases strength by one for each of first two wounds on character (excited by blood). Add one to break-off rolls.

Drants. Usually benign squad of flying insects frightened by characters, whom they proceed to sting. Each character is attacked once on the "0" differential column of the Character Combat Results Table only (insects die after stinging once). No break-off.

Drusers. Members of a religious cult that worships and develops the powers of the mind. Attack with an Intelligence and endurance of 5. Characters use their combined Intelligence ratings to defend. Combat results reduce endurance as per the rules and a char-

acter may be killed by the wounds so suffered, but his Intelligence (and the Drusers') is not reduced. Break-off chances determined by comparing Intelligence ratings.

Elliad. Electric intelligence which ensnares mission group. Each character attacked individually on the "0" column of the Character Combat Results Table each round, until he succeeds in breaking off (break-off resolved on "0" column). Characters cannot fight back.

Fog. Intelligent opaque mist that delimits in confusing travellers and leading them astray. If all characters in mission group have Intelligence rating of less than 3, no Bonus Draws are allowed for that mission; otherwise no effect.

Frost Mist. Intelligent spirit that wraps itself around its victims and freezes them to death. Defends with strength and endurance of 5. Its attacks are not rolled for; after each round of combat, each character incurs one wound (unless the creature was killed in that round). No break-off.

Gach. Two-headed feline creature with two conflicting personalities. Attacks with a strength of 7 and an endurance of 6. After each round of combat, the creature attacks itself. Roll the die and refer to the attacker's side of the "+1" column of the Character Combat Results Table and apply any wounds indicated to the creature before beginning the next round of combat.

Gadhars. Vicious wolf-like creatures that hunt their prey in packs. Attack with strength of 5 and endurance of 4. However, if the Gadhars survive two rounds of combat, more show up (sensing fresh meat); add *two* to the current strength and endurance of attacking Gadhars every odd-numbered combat round beginning with the third (if any survive into that odd-numbered round).

Gamels. Furry, one-horned quadrupeds, popular among the locals for their furs. Attack with a strength of 3 and an endurance of 2.

Gilekite. Large, mobile shell creature. Attacks with a strength of 3 and endurance of 3. Receives a surprise shift of two columns, and no break-off is allowed, in the first round of combat.

Glane. Vicious winged humanoid that is intractably hostile. Attacks with strength of 6 and endurance of 6. The combat is a *fire-fight*.

Gragg. Six-legged lizard creature that hides in the tall grasses of the Tamset plains, lying in wait for trespassers. Attacks with strength of 3 and endurance of 2. Surprise shift of one column, and no break-off is allowed, for the first round of combat.

Gyrogos. Living, spinning current that can only be detected by the destruction it causes. Attacks with strength of 6; characters may *not* fight back. After the first round, subtract "one" from all break-off die rolls.

Hysnatons. Sewer snakes with hypnotic powers. Attack with strength of 5 and endurance of 4. If any hysnatons survive the first two rounds of combat, the mission group may not receive any Bonus Draws for that mission. (The combat continues.)

Kinsog. Speed-tunneling dragon worm which attacks with strength of 3 and endurance of 2. Surprise shift of two columns, and no break-off, on the first round.

Laboroid. Mechanical defect in harmless-looking worker robot causes it to run amok. Attacks with strength of 3 and endurance of 3; receives surprise shift of two columns on the first round of combat. No break-off on the first round.

Lomrels. Large canines used as mounts by the local populace, who alone know the secret to their control. One attacks characters with a strength of 5 and an endurance of 3.

Leonus. An unheard-of cross-breed between a lion-like creature and a reptile, incredibly ferocious and stealthy. Attacks with a strength of 5 and endurance of 4. Receives a surprise shift of one column to the right on the first round; no break-off allowed on the first round.

Magron. Carnivorous plant grabs one character (drawn at random by opposing player). Other characters (if any) in Mission Group battle the vegetation. It has no attack strength and cannot harm the other characters; it defends with a strength of 0 and an endurance of 5. However, after each round of combat that the plant survives, the entwined character incurs one wound. If no other characters are on the mission, the grabbed character is consumed.

Mish. Swarm of armored insects which have adapted to secret Imperial chemical warfare experiments and now emit deadly toxins. Attack characters with strength of 6 and endurance of 3. No break-off.

Morna. Chieftain of local hydro-clan. Distrusts strangers. If all characters on mission have Diplomacy ratings less than 3, attacks with strength of 6 and endurance of 4. Otherwise, no effect.

Muggers. Clan of streetwise thieves. Attack with strength of 5 and endurance of 4. If both sides survive following three rounds of combat, the thieves run away with any one of the Mission Group's non-spaceship possessions, if any (picked at random; it is returned to the Possession Deck). No break-off; combat ends after three rounds no matter what.

Namdasn. Sentient sand that can assume human form or look like an innocent pile. Attacks with a strength of 4 and endurance of 4. No break-off, and surprise shift of two, on first round of combat.

Onflam. Flying, flaming being whose very touch burns. Attacks with fireballs at a strength of 6 and endurance of 2. Add one to all break-off rolls.

Propang. Overzealous messenger robot decides to tattoo message onto foreheads of characters. Attacks with strength of 5 and endurance of 3. Add one to break-off die roll on first round of combat (if any) only.

Prox. Large, crawling carnivorous insect that has huge, rending teeth, but is slow. Attacks with strength of 6 and endurance of 4. *Subtract* one from all break-off rolls.

Queemer. Gelatinous blob that grows stronger as it is dealt blasts and blows. Attacks with strength of 3 and endurance of 5.

However, strength is not reduced by wounds (although endurance still is); rather, strength *increases* by one for each wound the Queemer incurs.

Rotron. Metal-eating reptile attacks character's *spaceship* (if any), not characters. Defends with a strength and endurance of 3. If it is still alive after two rounds of combat, the ship is damaged (see Case 14.54). If no spaceship is in Environ that belongs to characters in the Mission Group, no effect.

Sandiabs. Feisty desert rats get off on watching travelers fall into carefully covered sand pits. Mean no real harm, though; there is no combat. However, no Bonus Draws are allowed on characters' mission, as they are stuck in rut.

Sekekers. Pack of rodents with poisonous quills. Attack with strength of 6 and endurance of 2.

Sentry Robot. Big Brother is watching! Attacks with strength of 4 and endurance of 2. (If two attack, strength of 7 and endurance of 4.)

Snorkas. Sentient poisonous seaweed-like growths. Can do great harm, but are rather fragile. Attack with strength of 8 for one round of combat, then is automatically destroyed. No defender break-off.

Snow Giants. Big, evil guys with clubs. Attack with a strength of 6 and endurance of 4.

Spithid. Large, delicate spider-like creature. Can produce webs and poisonous spray. Attacks with a strength of 6 and endurance of 1.

Stromuse. Seemingly innocent passerby suddenly turns invisible and attacks characters with strength of 2 and endurance of 2. Receives surprise shift of three columns, and no break-off is possible, on the first round of combat.

Synestins. Religious sect that exerts powerful control over much of the local populace. Believe in the honors of combat. If defeated by *Rebel* characters (i.e., if the Synestins' endurance reaches "0"), the planet's Loyalty Marker is shifted one space in the Rebels' favor. (Note: If missions shift the Loyalty Marker as well, the Domino effect is initiated as per Case 23.1.) Attack with strength of 5 and endurance of 4. Fight Imperial characters as well, but no shift occurs if they win.

Telebots. Information android's circuits overload; attempts to blow any one character's mind (owning player's choice). Battle utilizes Intelligence ratings, not strength; Telebot has Intelligence of 3 and endurance of 3. Intelligence ratings are not affected by reduction of endurance due to wounds incurred in the battle.

Thinagig. Large, human-like being made of malleable stone. Slow but powerful. Attacks with strength and endurance of 8. *Subtract* one from all break-off rolls.

Thunk. Savage woolly mammoth that exudes slow poisonous gas. Attacks with strength of 5 and endurance of 4. However, loss of endurance does not affect its strength;

(continued on page 7)

[continued from page 6]

in fact, it gains a strength point with each round of combat starting with the second.

Valaterix. Intelligent plant that can change the image it presents to individuals and astound them with the epitomy of beauty in their eyes. Characters are delayed by this intensely moving sight. No Bonus Draws for this mission.

Verfusier. Metallic being that toots along on a stellar-charged luminous elipse. Very fast. Attacks with a strength of 4 and endurance of 4. Add one to all break-off rolls.

Virus. Intelligent germ liquid. Attacks with strength of 10. Characters may not fight back, they may only attempt to break-off (all characters are considered *active* defenders).

Vorozion. Highly evolved, hostile thought being; very impatient. Attacks with Intelligence rating of 6 matched against combined Intelligence ratings of characters. Characters may not fight back or break-off; however, Vorozion will continue to attack only until a round occurs in which it fails to inflict any wounds, at which point it gets bored and leaves in disgust.

Vrialta. An Imperial Knight who deserted and went into self-imposed exile. Trusts no intruder and wears an armored exoskeleton with a built-in arsenal. Attacks with strength and endurance of 10. Combat is a *firefight*.

Wyths. Telepathic being that battles characters with conjured images of cut-throats and savages. Attacks with strength of 9 and endurance of 4. However, any one character's Intelligence rating may be subtracted from the creature's strength rating each round (including the first). One is added to all break-off rolls.

Ym-Barror. A plant and animal with a symbiotic relationship. Attacks with strength of 4 and endurance of 4. However, it/they gets *two* attack die rolls in each round of combat to the character's one. No break-off on first round.

Zernipak. Construction vehicle goes haywire, tries to excavate characters. Attacks with a strength of 5 and endurance of 4.

Zop. Friendly, furry creature that does not attack. Naturally, it ignores all Imperial characters (no effect on Imperials). However, it senses good vibrations from Rebel characters, and so it gives them ancient family heirloom kept safe in cave for eons; Rebel player draws one Possession Card (if a spaceship is drawn, the card is returned to the deck and another card is drawn; the Zop cannot fit a spaceship into its cave). The Zop may only be encountered by the Rebels once; it has no effect whatsoever thereafter. ■■

V. Characters

IMPERIAL CHARACTERS

Barca. Like all Kayns, Barca has a fierce loyalty for his friends and little mercy toward his enemies. For 40 years, Barca has been the Grand Marshal of the Imperial Army, both on planet and in space. His remarkable military prowess and ability to handle tactical



and strategic combat situations is at the disposal of the Empire, as Barca's loyalties remain fixed to the Imperial throne and whoever sits upon it.



Emperor Coreguya. Coreguya was chosen to be the next Emperor by Maxtross II, who is believed in turn to have been influenced by Redjac, who wanted a weak Emperor on the Imperial throne. If so, Redjac could not have made a better choice. Despite the immense power wielded by one who sits on the throne at Orlog, Coreguya has remained content to indulge in the luxuries of the Imperial Palace while allowing all decisions to fall on Redjac's shoulders.



Senator Dermond. The Imperial Senate would be little more than a joke were it not for Dermond, the only Imperial politician to have any influence on the Emperor at all. Dermond is the only person in the Imperial government who listens to the voices of the peoples of the galaxy, and is very popular in consequence. But although he does not care for the current Imperial policies, he is in favor of slow change and is as anti-Rebel as any hardened Imperial commander.

Gelba. One of the Lieutenant Governors of the Empire. While the post of Lieutenant Governor was once most influential in the Imperial ear, since the mechanizations of Redjac the job has degenerated into speech-making and paper-filing. Gelba has become quite bitter, since he spent 30 years of his life trying to claw his way up to the top, only to find he had clawed his way to the bottom.



Gelba

Vans Ka-Tie-A. The oldest member of the Imperial Knights, Vans Ka-Tie-A still remembers the days when the Imperial Knights were respected by all, and were a force that not only kept the Emperor safe but main-



tained peace and prosperity throughout the galaxy. But those days are gone, and with them the respect that Ka-Tie-A had from the other Imperial Knights, most of whom regard him as a senile old fool.



Jon Kidu. Kidu has both the job of Imperial Lieutenant Governor and Head of the Imperial Intelligence Service. In both positions, Jon Kidu is coolly efficient, following his orders to the letter, and letting no creature, no matter what his allegiance, stand in the way of his actions. As a result, Jon Kidu has become a name synonymous with fear throughout the entire Empire.



Thysa Kymbo. Daughter of the current Emperor Coreguya, the princess has spent most of her adult life waiting for her father to die, so that she may ascend to the throne. Be-

cause she has spent most of her life pampered in the Imperial Court, she is unaware that Redjac may have other plans for the throne that do not involve succession. The princess became the bitter enemy of Zina Adora when she learned that Rayner Derban was more attracted to Zina than to herself.



Redjac. By making charges that the former Most Senior of the Imperial Knights was guilty of treason, Redjac became the Leader of the Imperial Knights. From the time of his youth on the planet Magro, and his rise through the Imperial ranks on Diomas, Redjac's life has been one of ambition, plotting and taking. It is believed by many that Redjac's next conquest will be the Imperial throne itself.



Saytar. As a sub-commander of the Imperial armed forces, Saytar holds a rank just under Barca's in importance. Dedicated to the causes of battle and the Imperium (in that order) with a fervor beyond that which is normal for even a man in such a position, many believe Saytar will soon receive total control of the military, if he does not have it *de facto* already. Others feel his blind ambition will be his downfall.



Els Taroff. Whenever Redjac has a secret meeting, or is going over his tangled plots and intrigues, it is rare for Els Taroff not to be at his side. When Els Taroff first became an Imperial Knight, he was noted for his independence and his courage. But as time passed, he gradually became little more

than an extension of Redjac, not daring to breathe unless Redjac so orders.



Telman. The second Imperial Sub-Commander, Telman is little more than a hometown boy who made it good. Coming from the backwaters of Tsipa and becoming popular and distinguished in several battles, Telman was promoted to his current rank essentially to get him out of the way. In his current job, he feels so inexperienced that it is rare for him to show any initiative without Saytar looking over his shoulder.



Jin Voles. The most well known of the Imperial Knights, Jin Voles is the only Knight who matches the ideal of what most people feel an Imperial Knight should be — a dashing, heroic figure dedicated to the welfare of the Empire. However, Jin Voles will not stray one millimeter outside of his prerogative as an Imperial Knight, and therefore does not seem to be aware of the corruption of the Empire that surrounds him.

REBEL CHARACTERS

Zina Adora. The once influential Queen of Adare fled her home planet when she supported her people's side in several conflicts between the Empire and Adare, and the Em-



pire responded by forcibly setting up an Imperial puppet regime. Zina Adora joined the Rebel cause to try to regain her throne, but since then she has expressed the desire to give up her chance at rulership to be with Rayner Derban.



Boccanegra. The Piorad Space Vikings, as they called themselves, were a group of hardy explorers who were accustomed to exploring the areas of the Galaxy outside the boundaries of the Empire, bringing back treasures and riches from strange places. Unfortunately, the Space Vikings did not pay a high enough percentage of their riches to the Imperial coffers, and the majority of them were arrested and executed as space pirates. Boccanegra, the only one to slip through the Imperial fingers, swore revenge on the Empire for his friends.



Rayner Derban. Before Redjac became the Leader of the Imperial Knights, the Most Senior of the Knights was a mysterious, ever-masked person who always championed the cause of the people. The "Masked Knight" was forced to flee due to charges of treason by Redjac, and disappeared. When Rayner Derban joined the Rebels, some claimed to see the stance of the Masked Knight in Derban's stance, to hear the voice of the Knight in Derban's voice. But Derban will say nothing of his past. Rayner Derban is one of few who will dare to pass Kogus, the Kayn bodyguard, to see Zina Adora.



Sidir Ganang. "Sidir Ganang and the Ganang Gang" was one of the most popular stereovision shows on Bajukai, and Sidir Ganang posters, dolls, books, and grebble-gum cards made him a millionaire. But his fortune tugged at the greed of some minor Imperial functionary, and Sidir Ganang was blacklisted from the entertain-

ment business, and his fortune was confiscated. Formerly, Ganang had merely portrayed galactic warriors on stereovision; now he actually became one, fighting against the Empire.



Drakir Grebb. The Calma are a mild, passive race, but when one of them gets angry it can be years before he will cool down and forgive. When the Empire looked the other way while poachers hunted Calma for the precious metals within their gizzards, Drakir Grebb, Prince of Suti, himself went to Orlog to protest. When he barely escaped with his life, he vowed the Empire would never oppress his people again.



Odene Hobar. Odel Hobar could not believe what had happened to his son, Odene. He sends his son off to get a good look at the Empire, and he comes back and tells his father, Sovereign of Heliix, this nonsense about rebelling against the Empire! Furious, Odel excommunicated Odene until he settled down and was willing to accept the responsibility of being ruler of a planet and not believe such flighty nonsense.



Ran Jayma. It was quite a long time before the Rebel leaders would allow Ran Jayma, the notorious space pirate, to take the Rebel oath. But gradually they came to realize that even a pirate could tell right from wrong and see that the Empire had to be destroyed. Actually, Jayma was only being practical — if the Empire kept taxing 90% of everything, there would be that much less for his take.



Kogus. Since the time of the Kayn Mutiny, the family of Kogus had guarded the royalty of many planets faithfully, never abandoning their post. And so Kogus had guarded the Queen of Adare, Zina Adora, despite her exile. There are few who would dare the wrath of Kogus to visit Zina Adora — but Rayner Derban is one of those few.



Yarro Latac. An article in an obscure scientific journal noted that “despite many technological advances today, the Empire still has not come close to the level of technology possessed by the Interstellar Concordance.” As a result of this simple sentence, the Master Technician Yarro Latac was so hounded by Imperial persecution that he joined the Rebels just so he’d be able to finish his research.



Ly Mantok. An Imperial Sub-Commander is not supposed to have any outside business concerns, but this is a rarely enforced policy. Ly Mantok would no doubt have gotten away with his corrupt dealings, had not ten thousand Mantok Laser Rifles refused to function in the middle of the Battle of Banjukai. When Mantok was formerly dismissed, he swore that he would go to someone who would appreciate his abilities. The Rebels, at the time, were desperate enough to do just that.

Professor Mareg. There are few experts in the science of Galactography, and Mareg is one of them. There was little about the Empire and its organization that he did not know. Unfortunately, he did not regard his knowledge as secret, since most of it was a matter of public record anyway. But the Em-



pire did, and forced the ruin of his academic career. The Rebels, anxious to make use of his knowledge, convinced him to join, promising him a professorship at any university he desired if they won.



Bridne Murcada. For some, the art of unarmed combat is just a hobby, but for Bridne Murcada it was her whole life. For years she was a chief drill instructor, teaching unarmed combat and stealth to green Imperial soldiers, but she was dismissed when a jealous colleague revealed that she was not teaching them strictly by the book, despite the effectiveness of her methods. Murcada joined the Rebels because it was the only way she could put her abilities to the best use.



Agan Rafa. While for centuries the Empire had hired the Pronoxian Mercenaries to do their dirty work for them (mainly, establishing beachheads on unknown planets), the Empire decided that they were too great a security risk and gave them their severance. Fighting was the only job Agan Rafa had known, and if the Empire did not want him, he would find someone who would.



Scott Rubel. Action! Adventure! Danger! The imagination of the young Scott Ru-

bel had traveled the length and breadth of the universe, fighting and blasting his way to glory. As soon as he came of age, he joined the Rebel cause, hoping to have the excitement that he could otherwise only dream about. Fate works in mysterious ways, and shortly thereafter Rubel indeed became a Rebel hero by single-handedly saving a small village of locals from being razed by Imperial patrols.



Frun Sentel. Sentel was the first Royal personage to formally come out in public and state his support for the Rebel cause. He had counted on the support of his people to protect him personally from the Empire, but he underestimated the power of the Imperial press coupled with skilled semanticists, and he was forced to flee the planet Xan, or be lynched.



Doctor Sontag. The Planetary Stabilizer was a remarkable device — it could suddenly halt the rotation of a planet, causing its outer crust to flake off totally and fly into space, utterly destroying the biosphere but leaving the planet for Imperial terraforming. The inventor of the Stabilizer, Dr. Sontag, became so disgusted with himself for inventing such a device of mass destruction that he joined the Rebels to ease his tortured conscience.



Adam Starlight. Like most people, Adam never thought much about the Empire, he just lived his life the best he could and put the occasional oppression down to the toughness of life. But he could not ignore the slaying of his entire family, when Imper-

al troops who were going to interrogate the Starlink family tortured the Starlight family by mistake. His desire for vengeance burned so strongly that even the Rebels thought his hate for the Empire was unusually great.



Tourag. The Traders had traditionally been a free people, and even the Empire did not tax them strongly. But the Empire felt that the Traders were providing transportation for Rebel men and supplies, and their spaceships were confiscated. Faced with the prospect of having to earn an honest living, Tourag decided that joining the Rebels might be better for business in the long run instead.



Vudot Vodot. The powerful ability for oration and the piercing, some say hypnotic, eyes of Vudot Vodot made him very influential throughout the Empire, and on Akubera, where he was a planetary senator with a good shot for Planetary Sovereign. But the Empire's views on many matters did not match those of Vodot's, and a political scandal forced him out of office. Vudot Vodot did not particularly feel strongly about the Empire, but if they thought he was an enemy, well, they'd get one!



Oneste Woda. "Do not take it upon yourself to take away the most precious gift one has from another. . . . Killing is the resort of the foolish, or the cruel." Woda's words influenced a great many in the Empire, including many Imperial soldiers. Woda was a troublemaker anyway, so he was repressed as a matter of course. As Woda began to realize what the Empire was

trying to do to him, his sermons began to have a stronger anti-Empire sentiment, and he joined the Rebel cause to end the suffering under the Imperial hand. ■■

VI. Possessions

COMPANIONS



Advisor Android. Intended as an aid to ambassadors, the Advisor Android is programmed in protocol, information storage and retrieval, secretarial work, and Galactography.



Cervac Mk. V. This non-humanoid robot was originally designed to boost the mental abilities of its owner. However, it also has the ability to fog someone's mind into total inactivity, due to a design defect.



Charsot. Resembling a little dog, the Charsot, an animal from the planet Migest, can sense thought waves and transmit its own waves of pacification and reason. It can also sense the future to a limited extent.



Norrocks. The Thieves Guild constructed this bodyguard robot to protect its most important members. Sometimes, through proper bargaining, the Guild can be persuaded to part with one of its defensive robot bodyguards.

OBJECTS



Cache of Rare Gems. The Emperor has a great fancy for expensive jewelry, and as a result the price of certain gemstones has soared. When a small collection of such stones is at hand, they can be used to purchase almost anything.



Helian Drug. A few small drops of this mixture, distilled on Hiliac from special

plants on the Drug World, add vim, vigor and vitality to the user. It is often used despite severe penalties imposed by the Empire for its possession.



Medi-kit of Ptolus. Constructed according to strictures laid down by the great Dr. Ptolus, the Medi-kit speeds up the body's natural healing ability without burning out the patient's energy reserves.



Personal Body Shield. Built years ago during the Interstellar Concordance, this finely constructed exoskeleton emanates a force field that shields out kinetic energy from both beams and blows.

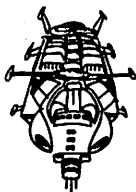


Scanner. This hand-held device scans the electromagnetic flux for kilometers around, revealing the location of other electronic detection devices, especially the powerful detectors of Planetary Defense Bases.

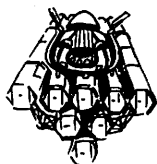


Scrambler. The Scrambler is an ancient artifact from the days of the Interstellar Concordance. It can overload electronic devices from a great distance by hyperspatial induction. Unfortunately, it breaks down quite easily.

SPACESHIPS



Explorer. The Explorer is designed, naturally enough, for the exploration of stellar systems outside the boundaries of the Empire. As befits what may turn out to be an ambassadorial ship, it is only moderately well-armed.



Galactic Freighter. Ideal for carrying large cargoes on well-traveled trade routes,

the Galactic Freighter is a poor ship to use for espionage. It is very difficult to maneuver, and has only very light screens.



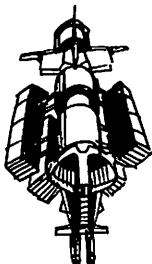
Interstellar Sloop. This ship is the standard Volkswagen of the Empire; it is designed for easy, idle jaunts through space. Its cannons are only moderately effective, and its maneuverability is but fair.



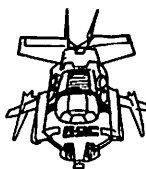
Planetary Privateer. The Planetary Privateer is the ship most commonly used by space pirates. Too many people have stared down the muzzles of its cannon and cursed its high maneuverability.



S-XIII. The culmination of computer design and hyper-jump mapping by the old Interstellar Concordance led to the building of the S-XIII, a self-aware spaceship with incredible maneuverability and shielding, albeit with no offensive weaponry.



Solar Merchant. On less well-traveled space routes, the Solar Merchant is reckoned better than the Galactic Freighter. The Solar Merchant trades off a smaller cargo space for more maneuverability and shielding.



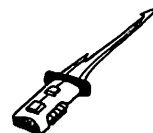
Star Courier. For most simple planet-to-planet hops, the average businessman of the Empire uses the Star Courier. It has enough maneuverability and shielding to protect it from space pirates.

Stellar Cruiser. The ship designed to get messages from one planet to another,



through cosmic storm and gloom of nebula. It is highly maneuverable, with good cannon power and very good shielding.

WEAPONS



Assassin's Blade. Though it looks like a common dagger, this beautifully deadly device is finely balanced for throwing and coated with a fatal nerve poison. It can be quickly removed from its hidden case for easy blood-letting.



High Energy Sniper's Rifle. This weapon is normally restricted to use by the Imperial Secret Police. Many times the Rifle made the difference between success and failure of an assassination attempt.

VII. Planet Secrets

Casino Galactica. The Emperor's pleasure world hosts the largest gaming and gambling complex in the galaxy. Admission to the gilded halls and pavilions is hard to obtain, usually reserved for the young, rich and famous. At the end of the Rebel Mission Phase, each Rebel Mission Group on the planet that contains a character with an Intelligence Rating of *four* receives a Possession, free of charge. It does not matter how the Group fared on their mission or what that mission was, as long as the Group performed a mission and at least one character in the Group with an Intelligence Rating of four survived the Action Events. The Rebel Player draws a Possession and assigns it to any character in the Mission Group. Casino Galactica is destroyed when the planet is placed into Rebellion; thereafter, the planet does not have this attribute.

Cloning Complex. When any important personage dies, whether friend or foe of the Empire, a cell sample from his remains is sent to this planet for cataloging and experimentation as a matter of routine. When a Mission Group belonging to either Player completes a Gain Characters mission on the planet, he may draw a friendly character (at random) from among those previously killed in the game. If none of the Player's characters are currently dead, he draws a character from

the deck of characters not yet in play, as per the normal routine. Control of the planet is irrelevant to this attribute.

Dead World. The Imperial research and development department has already eradicated all life on this planet while testing their latest peace-keeping devices. When this planet is revealed to the Rebel Player, immediately implement all the effects of Case 36.34, as if the Imperial Atrocity listed in that case had just been initiated by the Imperial Player (including the Domino Effect). However, characters and military units currently on the planet are not eliminated; they may not perform *any* game functions while on the planet, except to move off of it. No units may be moved to the planet after its secret has been revealed.

Drug World. All matter on this planet is laced with a powerful but destructive stimulant. Any character in an Environ of the planet has all his characteristic ratings increased by *one* (including any special characteristic, but not including ratings normally at "0"). At the end of a Player's Mission Phase, all his characters on the planet must receive one wound each. Wounds may not be healed on the Drug World.

Empire Forever. The entire population of this planet thinks the Empire is the best thing since sliced moon bread, and does not like hearing otherwise. When this Planet Secret is revealed, the Loyalty marker is immediately moved to the Patriotic space, if it is not there already. The Imperial Player may tax this planet, when eligible, at its full Resource value without incurring an unfavorable loyalty shift (he would have to reveal the secret to do so). On all Coup or Diplomacy missions the Rebel Player performs, the first appropriate Mission Letter that comes up in the Action Deck is ignored. The planet's loyalty may not be shifted in the Rebel Player's favor as a result of any Domino Effect initiated on another planet or by Galactic Events. If the planet is placed into Rebellion, it loses these attributes.

Gem World. The rarest precious stones and metals in the Empire are mined and processed on this mineral-rich planet. The Imperial Player receives *five* extra Force Points during *every* Resource Phase that he controls this planet, regardless of which province is currently being taxed (he does not have to reveal the secret to receive the Force Points). If the planet is placed into rebellion, the Rebel Player receives *three times* the normal Force Points for his Resource Track. The amount of Force Points he receives to build military units on the planet immediately is not affected. The Action Event *Populace goes wild!* will double the Force Points for immediate expenditure, but not the Force Points for the Resource Track. After a rebellion is achieved on the planet, and its effects implemented, the planet no longer has this attribute.

Hyper-World. Lying on the edge of the dimension used for hyperjumping, distance and time on this planet are compressed. Either Player may assign any Mission Groups on this planet *two* missions per Mis-

sion Phase. Action Cards are drawn in the normal manner, with each card affecting the outcome of both missions. Bonus Draws are taken for each mission separately. A character may contribute any of his characteristics to the conduct of both missions.

Imperial Archives. Complete records, classified and unclassified, of Imperial conquests, discoveries, and programs are kept under lock and key on this planet. If the Rebel Player completes a Gather Information mission on the planet (by drawing one Mission Letter in the Action Deck), *all* Planet Secrets in the game are immediately revealed, and remain revealed. If the Planet Secret *Trap!* is revealed as a result of this, it is removed from play.

Imperial Deltronics Ltd. The Empire's spacecraft industry is centered on this planet and the latest in spacefaring technology is constantly being tested on and above the planet. Whenever a Rebel spaceship is undergoing detection on this planet, shift *two* columns to the right on the Detection Table, in addition to any other shifts. Exception: The S-XIII Spaceship is not subject to this column shift. If the Rebel Player completes a Gather Information mission here (by drawing one Mission Letter in the Action Deck), he receives a spaceship. Separate the spaceships (except the S-XIII) from the other possessions in the Possession Deck and draw one at random. If there are no spaceships currently in the Possession Deck, or if the planet has been placed into rebellion, this attribute is ignored.

IPOC. An acronym for the Imperial Peace Operations Center, this planet is the headquarters of the Empire's armed forces. If this planet is placed into rebellion, *all* Imperial mobile military units in play are immediately turned face-up and remain face-up for the rest of the game. This includes Suicide Squads, Imperial Atrocity units and any Imperial military units brought into play subsequently.

Industrial World. This planet is loaded with high-quality metal ores for industrial use. The planet has the same attributes as the *Gem World* (see at left) except that it gives only *three* extra Force Points to the Imperial Player each Resource Phase, and the Rebel Player receives only *twice* the normal Force Points for his Resource Track if the planet is placed into rebellion.

Living Planet. This planet, in its entirety, is a sentient being just waiting for the Rebels to arouse its wrath against the Empire. Ignore any Coup Ratings or Sovereigns on the planet. If a Rebel Mission Group completes a Diplomacy mission on this planet (by drawing one Mission Letter in the Action Deck), the planet is immediately placed into rebellion, with all the normal effects except that the Domino Effect is *never* initiated as a result of actions on this planet. Rebel characters and military units receive an automatic *two* column shift adjustment on their respective Combat Results Tables when involved in any type of combat while on this planet.

Mutant World. Bathed in radioactive particles by a passing comet, all life on this

planet has mutated into terrifying forms. Ignore all creatures currently listed in any Environs on this planet and do not use the Irate Locals Chart on this planet. All Environs are considered occupied by creatures with a strength of 10 and an endurance of 9. All Irate locals on the planet have a strength of 8 and an endurance of 8; the combat is hand-to-hand.

Slave World. Beings from countless worlds that the Empire has conquered are shipped to this planet, where they are forced to produce goods and perform services for the Empire under abysmal conditions. The Imperial Player receives *five* extra Force Points during every Resource Phase that he controls this planet, regardless of which province is currently being taxed (he does not have to reveal the secret to receive the Force Points). If the planet is placed into rebellion, the Rebel Player receives *three times* the normal Force Points with which to buy military units for the planet's Environs immediately. The amount of Force Points he receives for his Resource Track is not affected. The Resource Values of each Environ are considered to be star-faring. The Action Event *Populace Goes Wild!* will double the Force Points for the Rebel Resource Track, but not for immediate expenditure. After a rebellion is achieved on the planet, and its effects implemented, the planet no longer has this attribute.

Trap! The Imperial espionage system is centered on this planet, although very effectively disguised. Any detected Rebel characters that are in any Environ of this planet when its secret is revealed are immediately captured. Rebel prisoners on this planet need not be accompanied by Imperial characters or military units to remain captured, although Imperial characters would have to be present to question or torture them. After *Trap!* has been revealed, detected Rebel characters no longer become automatically captured when on the planet, but once captured still do not need to be guarded. When the planet is placed into Rebellion, it no longer possesses these attributes.

Welcome Rebels. The entire population of this planet has secretly hated the Empire for ages. When this secret is revealed, the Loyalty marker is immediately placed in the Dissent space, if it is not currently at Unrest or in Rebellion. Once revealed, if the Imperial Player taxes the planet *at all*, the Loyalty marker is moved one space in the Rebel Player's favor. If the Imperial Player does not tax the planet when eligible, the Loyalty marker is not moved. On all Coup or Diplomacy missions that the Imperial Player performs, the first appropriate Mission Letter that comes up in the Action Deck is ignored. The planet's loyalty may not be shifted in the Imperial Player's favor as a result of Domino Effects initiated on other planets or by Galactic Events. If the planet is placed into Rebellion, the Rebel Player receives *twice* the normal amount of Force Points for immediate expenditure and for his Resource Track. If the Action Event *Populace goes wild!* comes up in the Action Deck, it is ignored. ■ ■