

For Referees

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

*For use with the
Encyclopaedia Dagushashaag*

TRAVELLER [®]

*Science-Fiction Adventure
In Dagudashaag Sector*

Signal-GK Productions

Requires the FREE

Encyclopaedia Dagudashaag Sector Sourcebook.

Stop!

If you are likely to take part at any time as a **PLAYER** in a campaign or game set in the **Dagudashaag Sector** please stop reading now.
This book contains, as the famous **Xeno-Archaeologist**, **Dr. River Song** would say **“Spoilers!”**

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Background

Signal-GK was a fanzine produced in the UK, as a resource for referees of Traveller. During its four year, often irregular run, the contributors, among other things, detailed the whole of Dagudashaag Sector for the classic and rebellion period. Much of this vast library of information has been contained within the Encyclopaedia. This gives some referee insights relating to that sourcebook.

Credits

~ Editor ~

Jae Campbell

~ Dagudashaag Development Team (DDT) ~

Jae Campbell, Duncan Law-Green, Stuart Machin, Tim Osbourne, Andrew Pickford, Leighton Piper, Lee Richardson, Ade Stewart and C. Nick Walker.

~ **Thanks to the following additional contributors to Signal-GK** ~

Peter Antill, Anthony Baggeley, David Burden, Keven Berry, Martin Blake, Andy Bolstridge, Andy Boulton, Ben Chambers, Timothy Collinson, Andy Goddard, Steve Hatherley, Ann Hindson, Colin Hollands, David Johnson, David Jones, Justin Key, Andy Lilly, Nick Law, Bruce Lewis, Barbara Lucas, Stuart Machin, Mike Mikesch, Dominic Mooney, Roger E. Moore, Nick Munn, Roger Myhre, Alison Nash, Paul Radford, Lee Richardson, Dave Robertson, Megan Robertson, Ian Rowan, Paul Sanders, Dee Smith, John Tatman, Angela Taylor, Neil Taylor, Django Upton, Steve Wass, and Nik Whitehead.

~ Artists ~

Tim Osbourne, Duncan Law-Green & Jake Reeson

**And special thanks to the “Resurrectionist Team”
who revived the “fragrant bones” of Signal-GK in the 21st Century**

Leighton Piper, Scott Martin, Ewan Quibell and Richard Artis
Maksim Smelchak, Robert Eaglestone and Thomas Jones-Low

Welcome to the Dag', a Sector that has been a major crossroads for over 40 million years; from before the Ancients to the present, a Sector filled with mystery, adventure and excitement.

This is a FREE supplement for the FREE Encyclopaedia Dagudashaag from Signal GK Productions; a PDF which detailed 559 solar systems, introduced one extremely skilled, well informed hacker called CyJac, several minor sophont races, some brilliant artwork and lots and lots of adventure hooks...

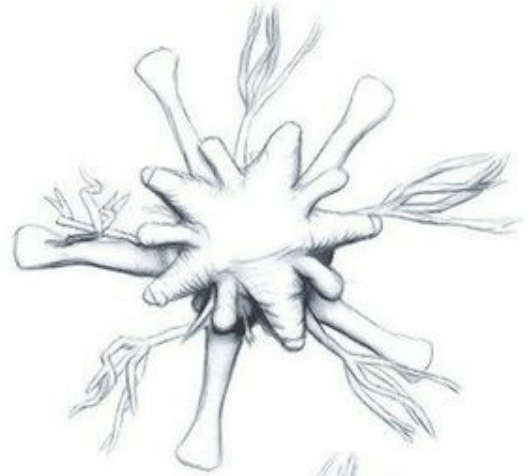
This PDF booklet contains answers to some of the many mysteries and intrigues in the Dag', details the 'extinct' Malaach race as well as news stories that can be used as adventure hooks.

For those interested in running a campaign set in the Sector it also lists links to detailed Port of Call and Contact articles detailed in the original 13 issues of the Signal-GK fanzine which can be downloaded from <http://wiki.travellerrpg.com/Signal-GK/issues> again for free.

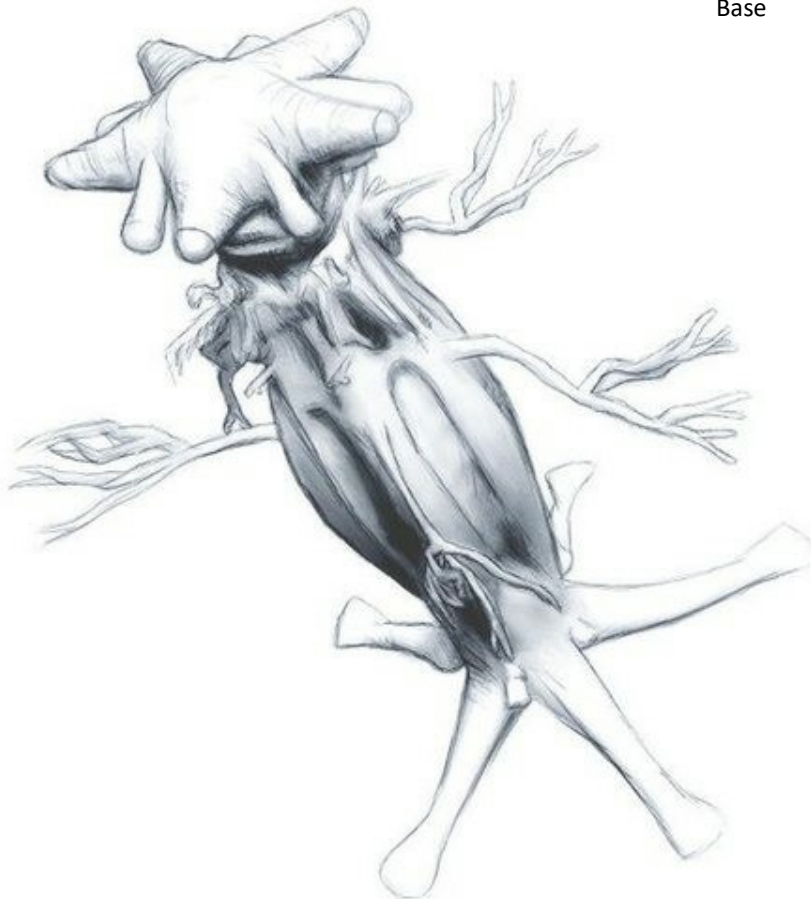




Head



Base



REFEREE INFORMATION

Abbayi, Argi (0936) C682343-8 Lo Va rg3 { -2 } (921-5) [1125] B - - 804 7 ImDv K2 V M0 V

In 799 the Scanians established a secret Psionics Institute on the planet which has continued its training up to the present day. Only unadapted Scanian's and Sanhedra Rab'ani, who would not be missed are tested and sent. Once trained they return to their communities and teach the chosen and talented how to become Sanheichiir.

ACATHII <Göheimsan for 'Elders'>

Artefacts dating back more than 40 million years have been found on several systems in the Remnants Subsector. These suggest evidence of an advanced sentient, spacefaring race that lived on several planets in the subsector millions of years ago.

The racial evidence is varied – fossils of small organic machine-like objects found in vast collapsed chambers on Apemkir (1622), underground chambers melted out of solid stone, circular in shape on Ussine (1523), even an abandoned city deep under the snow of the planet's South Pole on Cr'cpuc (1530). The most important finds were several fossils of a creature believed to be of Acahii found on both Larsen (1526) and on Madingik (1126).

These fossils show a creature with a vegetable-like or echinoderm-like structure. This meant that no actual organic material survived to be fossilised only impressions embedded in mud or organic material and subsequently fossilised.

These impressions detail a creature that stood 2.5m from end to end with a metre central diameter, tapering to one foot at each end. The overall appearance was of a huge, oval-shaped barrel with five bulging ridges in place of staves and with starfish-like appendages at both ends. The top appendage was apparently the head adorned with what is believed to be five eyes, four eating tubes, and a set of cilia for apparently "seeing" in the dark. The bottom appendage was five-limbed and was used for movement. Their manipulative tentacles were spaced at regular intervals about their bodies. These had an appearance of thin stalk-like tendrils that sprouted from their torsos. These tentacles were spaced at regular intervals about their bodies.

These creatures must have mastered space travel though utilising what form of transport whether generation ships (they may well have been extremely long-lived for all we are able to hypothesise) or by some form of jump drive is unknown. None of their equipment has survived down the millennia. The Acahii were almost immortal and were capable of hibernating for centuries. They rarely spawned and in the end became extinct as the race gradually became sterile.

An information blackout has been maintained since the initial discovery was first announced. The Acahii race are unknown to the general public.

Akiva, Argi (0935) A98A879-D Ri Wa Ph (Scanian)6 (Aquan)3 { 3 } (F7E+4) [9B6E] BCe N - 105 16 ImDv G8 V M2 V

See Port of Call: Akiva (Signal-GK fanzine issue 1)

ALIKASCH <Cultural variant, originating on Medurma, Pact (2124)>

See Contact: The Alikasch (Signal-GK fanzine issue 2)

AQUAN <Geneered Human Variant>

See Contact: The Scania (Signal-GK fanzine issue 1)

ANCIENTS

Dagudashaag was a key region for Ancient activity – it was a major transport route between Terra and their original homeworld as well as several other major Ancient sites across known space. Several of Grandfathers' offspring settled on worlds in the Sector. The discovery of the Malaach who had already expanded across the Sector before the arrival of the Ancients eventually led to a war of extermination and the apparent total destruction of the Malaach. Then came the Final War. Today all that is left are lots of tantalising clues as to the previous presence of a number of highly advanced alien races across the sector.

Ander's Moon, Kuriishe (3012) B310389-D Lo { 1 } (921+2) [446E] B - - 504 9 ImDv K1 V M8 V

The moon of Jayne, 3rd satellite of the gas giant, Greystoke, has an undiscovered but abandoned pirates' base buried below its icy surface. The power plant and life support are still intact and functional.

Anomaly, Argi (1633) C9E7877-9 Ph An DroyW { 0 } (D79+1) [8859] Be S - 812 12 ImDv M2 V

The Ancient's originally intended to transport Anomaly via Jumpspace to the Medurma/Pact system, where it would have formed part of a three world rosette. The experiments were interrupted by the Final war and the distortion of the planetary crust was caused by the "arcing" of jump energy from the field cables implanted in the crust. TL16 high penetration densitometer readings have shown a number of artificial voids at about a 20km depth, but this information has not been made public.

ARGILUU, Ushra (1317) B68A997-C Hi Wa Pr Sa { 3 } (G8E+3) [9C5C] BcE N - 114 10 ImDv K8 V

A number of tarballs were tunnelled out by the Malaach to act as hives. Their buoyancy has since deteriorated, and they now float at about 30km depth, beyond the range of current densitometers. They are probably unoccupied, but there could be a few eggs in cold storage...

ASHDAK MESHUKIIBA

See Contact: Ashdak Meshukiiba (Signal-GK fanzine issue 10)

Errata: Home planet was wrongly attributed to Rabir (2405) instead of to Uurku (2402) in Signal-GK.

Since Uurku was settled by the first empire, the colonists have stayed well away from cow-ant territories. Stories of cow-ants are lost in the local populaces history, 99% of the population now view the cow-ants as nothing more than a myth. Cow-ant territories are rarely explored due to their swamp-like or humid natures, humans find the mangroves and rain forests uncomfortable and of little economic interest. For several years the Pathrrrumbarba colony has been in secret contact with a handful of people from the northern human colonies, and have been selling information about weather patterns, crops, tidal influences and locations of ore loads to the northern settlers. Recently Pathrrrumbarba has started to export small trinkets and earthenware produced by cow-ant craftsmen, for sale offworld. Along with these goods a steady stream of cow-ant 'servants' have been sold on to Vilani planets, to date perhaps 1600 cow-ants have found their way onto the vilani market at a price of cr200,000 each.

Adventure Hook: The Brethren Uplift Institute has heard and reported the tales of Uurku traders selling indentured servants in the Vilani sector. The MOJ, have authorised the BUI to conduct a full investigation on their behalf. Upon further enquiries the BUI has discovered that the slaves are not human, but are the Ashdak Meshukiiba or cow-ants. The PCs may be hired to investigate the source of these slaves, and in the process, may discover that a few humans in the northern colony are in actual fact only the agents of the sentient cow-ants, who are themselves selling on their own kind for profit, and technology. The BUI has been aware of the cow-ant population of Uurku for several decades during which time it has helped many cow-ant communities to set up their own uplift offices. However this seemingly easy task has always met failure, now with the advent of slaving, in the northern communes the BUI intends to send a research team to investigate why these kind and gregarious sophonts can so completely lack any compassion for their less fortunate brethren. The PCs may be hired to institute the forced uplift of the whole cow-ant population, or maybe just to investigate the sociological reasons which are forcing the cow-ants to act in this manner. They may also be hired on as part of a blockade, to prevent any more slaves being extracted. Whilst in orbit around the planet players lose radio communication with the dirtside research party. They try to locate them with NAS sensors but can find no brain patterns at all on the planet surface. Within a short while radio communications are re-established and the incident is forgotten. The accident with the radio shows us that the world has a psionic shield either natural or sophont-made. Many previous visitors to this planet have noticed this fact but somehow it has never been pointed out to the authorities. If the PCs try to report it, the authorities will accept the PCs statements as fact but somehow still never find it within themselves to do any thing about it.

Malaach Restored? If you don't like the idea of the cow-ants/shrimp being altered Malaach males, that's O.K. ignore this whole section.

The Ashdak Meshukiiba are the genetically altered descendants of a nest of surviving male Malaach who undertook extreme genetic manipulation and alteration to avoid extinction at the hands of the Ancients.

There are many mysteries to the fauna of this planet: studies have revealed that all animal life here is arranged in this particular asexual triple cousin manner (e.g. aphid, shrimp, adult). There are no females at all in any of the species on this planet. How can life evolve in this manner? And why do all the species on this planet sport sets of vestigial male sex organs if there are no female counterparts?

Evidently females did exist once on this planet. Fossilised evidence proves the point, however none of these fossils show any physiological forms similar to the arthropodic life forms that inhabit the planet today.

In fact fossil evidence shows that all life was replaced by this arthropodic form during the major environmental changes that took place 300,000 years ago.

Adventure Hook: While with the Pathrrrubarba colony the PCs are approached by a member of the Exploration Office who has a yen to visit other planets on a voyage of discovery. If the characters agree he will turn up at their pick up site with a small portable lake, displacing three tons, and especially constructed for his journey. It contains an enclosed ecosystem with trained shrimps for him to maintain his sentience. On leaving the planet the PCs NAS sensor suite will immediately pick up strong activity (equal to that of a telepath) emanating from the cow-ant. If the characters ship is boarded by the blockade or customs; gradually over a period of months the self contained ecosystem will die despite the PCs attempts at preventing it. This is due to the very balanced nature of the ecosystem, the designers didn't expect the tank to be inspected by rigorous investigators. The PCs must find an alternative source of nutrition for the cow-ant. Without access to a source of shrimps the cow-ant will eventually become nothing more than an intelligent animal. If the PC's suggest returning to its' home planet, the cow-ant will become angry and stubborn, not appreciating its dilemma, only knowing that it has a quest of discovery to fulfil. If the PCs have the heart to refuse the creature its request, it will sneak off ship at the next starport, in an attempt to find its own way to its destiny. The PCs' may cross its path in later years.

If the PCs do go along with the flight of fantasy they will eventually find themselves at Undim/Ushra where the cow-ant will insist upon landing to look at the surface, when told that he cannot land in an asteroid belt he will become confused, threatening and violent. Though tall, swift and fearsome looking, the cow-ant is incapable of doing any real harm to the PC's or their ship. The cow-ant will soon fall into a deep depression, it's normally waxy smooth shell becoming flaky and patchy until after several days without food he will cease to function. If the PCs return the cow-ants' body to the cow-ant homeworld, they will be thanked and paid for their trouble (in rare earths). The cow-ants will question the PC's as to their final destination. When the PCs describe to them the system of Undim, a sadness will sweep across the community. Some hours later the PCs may be contacted by yet another cow-ant, this time from the Office of Histories who would also like to hire the PCs for a similar journey. If the PCs agree all will go well this time, its ecosystem will flourish, and the cow-ant gradually proves to be a good friend to the PC's. Again the PCs will notice the strong NAS readings within their own ship while the cow-ant is wearing a shrimp, another interesting development is the fact that the cow-ants vestigial sex organs become active over a period of weeks as they near their eventual destination, the planet Nox. On Nox the cow-ant will make directly for a particular magnetic anomaly, an enormous solid mound, where he will find a large group of arthropods of a more complex, but not dissimilar structure, to the cow-ants. After long nervous moments a single arthropod steps from the crowd, and delicately touches the cow-ants face. A series of probes and examinations ensue conducted by the curious Noxian spider. Within some 40 seconds of this interrogation three spiders stride forward from the crowd. As he turns his attention to the PC's and starts to say " I think I am going to be happy here:-", the three Noxians jump upon him and ruthlessly rip him apart. The spiders leave his corpse behind them and return to their mound, leaving the PC's dumb-founded.

Background: 350,000-300,000 years ago a Malaach deep space base, in stasis; collided with this world after sustaining battle damage. Stranded here the Malaach engaged on a four point plan of survival; Firstly they designed and built a psionic shield that cloaked the world against Grandpas' probing mind This shield appears- to be naturally occurring, even under close scrutiny. Second, they Bio-engineered a whole new food chain which was virtually self contained and consisted the Triple cousin life cycle. In this system the Malaachs' vast brain was further disguised against discovery by splitting it in two, one half containing an ever growing tile of memories, encoded in RNA ,the other, virtually untapped only ever fully accessed when the two parts of the brain are mated The Malaach chase to invest all of their great knowledge and abilities in this great organic data bank.

the might of the Malaach could live on indefinitely, awaiting the thy when the opportunity would arise for this organic memory to once again restore the Malaach (it was a long shot but they were desperate and all they could hope was to outlive their enemy in some way.) Third they killed all animal life on the planet to prevent their delicate plans being dashed by an evolving life form. This had a catastrophic effect on the plant life of the planet.

Fourth they instituted a re-growth plan for foliage, With nothing to feed on it the forests of the planet spread like wild fire to their present state of world domination. When humans appeared on the scene some 309,000 years later the cow-ants assessed our use as a tool for re-unification of their parent race. What the stranded Malaach did not allow for was the change that may have occurred in the female side of its' species. When the envoy journeyed to Nox with the unsuspecting Humans, the changed Noxians found it to be nothing more than a curiously attractive threat to their existence. Other Malaach sites may house more understanding females, only the future may tell.

ATHAR

See Contact: Athar (Signal-GK fanzine issue 2)

BOLIVAR, Bolivar (0240) A78699D-E Hi Ga Cp Pr Pz Asla0 {4} (G8G+5) [DD9J] BcEF N S A 814 11 ImDv K1 V M9 V

See Port of Call: Bolivar (Signal-GK fanzine issue 11)

Bradley Barrier, The

The Bradley Barrier is indeed an Ancients' device that was being tested by the Medurman Sector Navy. Its influence unfortunately, is rather erratic.

BURUGDI

See Contact: Burugdi (Signal-GK fanzine issue 6)

Cablu, Shallows (0214) D548543-7 Ag Ni { -2 } (742-5) [2324] BC - - 100 13 ImDv K1 V

Taken from the INDISS news report: Paedagog Rediscovered

Earlier today, authorities on Cablu finally admitted that the famous holo-vid "The Paedagog" had been recovered from a deserted basement in Cain almost 224 years after it was originally stolen. As yet the public has not been allowed to see the famous work which was apparently rescued mere hours before the site was due to be demolished. The original holo-vid was created by Kir Bolton in 544 and depicted his now famous animation showing thousands of young from all the known races within the Imperium creating paradise from clay. It was originally stolen during a daring daytime raid from the Carter Museum and, at the time, the authorities assumed that they would be contacted with the robber's demands. When nothing further was heard, it was then assumed that the work had to have been sold to a private collector and that it was unlikely ever to resurface. It therefore came as quite a shock to discover the piece in such humble circumstances after all these years. The Carter Museum stated that, while the piece needed some restoration work, it was wonderful to see it again and hoped to have it on display within the week.

The Carter Museum has just released a statement that "The Paedagog" has been re-stolen, only hours after it had been handed back to the Museum. Police believe this may have been a student prank and are requesting the safe return of the vid no questions asked".

Adventure Hook: Find the holo-vid and either return it to the authorities or get it off planet. Copies of the video could be secretly copied and sold multiple times to collectors as the original.

Campbell, Pact (1722) B99A200-E Lo Wa { 2 } (811-2) [1419] B W - 204 7 ImDv M1 V

The outer moon, Càirdeas, is in reality a Pit Stop. Initially, it was established to allow indentured debtor's from Dashi to hide until a suitable ship could be found to take them to another subsector. Most were smuggled off-planet hidden inside chemical waste transporters which no-one thought to check.

The base on the moon has a large underground settlement known as the Cairn that is supplied from a supposedly derelict 1,000 tonne waste transporter, the Cruachan which is parked in orbit amongst a fleet of other mothballed transporters and ships awaiting decontamination. This secret up-port uses a fleet of blacked-out shuttles to secretly transport people down to the underground base so none of the trafficked people know where they were being sent or staying until forwarded to their new destinations.

The Cairn also houses an extensive smugglers black market where almost anything can be bought or commissioned.

CORSETTIN

Taken from Legends and Lore: The Turren Treasures

Following the discovery of an ancient civilisation (the Corsettin), a team of Vilani archaeologists set up a base to unearth some of Karrana'ch's past history. The original race were non-human sophonts who apparently never progressed beyond tech level 3. The culture was based around sun-worship, a common phenomenon found throughout space amongst primitive societies. Fire was seen as the "earthly" son of god and was treated with equal reverence.

All funerals ended in cremation (or so it seemed) except criminals. Through fire one was believed to come into contact with the spirit of god - cleansed, purified and reborn free of sins. Criminals appear to have been mutilated at death, hence the lack of accurate anatomical detail of the race found at any of the archaeological sites. All the known details of the races exact features come from rough statues and crude wall paintings.

Gold covered caskets had been found presumably containing the ashes of the dead - albeit individuals important within the primitive society.

The Karrana'ch system is found well within the region claimed by the S'mrii and the world itself holds a significant S'mrii minority. At the time of the investigations this resulted in conflict when the Vilani teams tried to remove artefacts to Vland for further analysis and display. The S'mrii were against the removal of any items, however small, from the planet and put up a blockade to halt the departure of any ships from the surface. Within a few weeks the blockade had turned into a siege and finally outright hostilities ensued.

A major incident occurred five months after the blockade was initiated when a Vilani light escort vessel was leading a party of archaeologists' off-planet back to Vland (sector). Information received by the S'mrii strongly indicated that a large number of valuable treasures were on board. When the escort refused to stop and prepare for a boarding party to search for the artefacts, the two patrolling S'mrii vessels opened fire.

The damage from the first volley was light and the Vilani ship made for outer system in an attempt to reach jump point. Further fire resulted in more significant damage and the escort was forced to try and hide amongst the rocky moons of the Turren gas giant.

The S'mrii vessels eventually caught up with the Vilani ship. When it refused to surrender, they attempted a pinpoint power plant hit to disable the Vilani vessel, but its fusion core detonated, killing all aboard. Salvage teams searching the relatively intact wreckage could find no trace of the valuable cargo. A number of search parties were sent to search the locale for signs of the material on the assumption that the crew had hidden it before their destruction. Yet despite the searches at the time and numerous attempts since, there has been no recorded success in the finding of the "Turren Treasures" as they have become known.

Their actual existence is now apparently in some doubt as documentary evidence from the archaeological site as well as the Escort Captain's log may have been tampered with. Both sets of records appeared to confirm that some sort of treasure had been loaded aboard the ship. With no exact information on the type of treasures, and thus no real idea as to possible financial returns, few professional treasure hunters have undertaken serious expeditions to Turren. The costs, most have argued, will probably outweigh any gains. Yet many amateurs, fuelled by historian's claims that the treasure could have been worth multi-millions, have set out to search the moons of Turren for themselves.

Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag Sector By Ishmaga Ershuk

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Adventure Hook: The artefacts were on board the vessel and still exist, undisturbed on Amuh'kar (or more accurately, in Amuh'kar), the fourth satellite out from Turren. The treasures are located in a natural cave, some 300 metres below the surface (access through a natural shaft). The items are in a remarkably good condition, thanks to the vacuum conditions on the satellite and protection from micro-meteorites.

The most significant item as far as archaeologists, palaeopathologists and historians are concerned is the presence of three well-preserved bodies of the now extinct Corsettin. As far as money-minded treasure hunters are concerned there is a metal casket inlaid with silver, gold and platinum with various precious gems. The casket is one metre long and about a metre wide. Its current value is possibly in excess of MCr.10 to the interested collector though its base value is probably only about MCr. 1.75. Yet there is a catch: the bodies and the casket are contained in an airtight unit.

The bodies contain preserved bacterial spores which will germinate under warm and moist conditions. Once the unit is opened the spores will be released and lodge in the lungs and other exposed moist surfaces of all not in vacc suits. Standard decontamination procedures will destroy the spores. Contamination will result in a severe pulmonary disease (such as a Legionnaires'-like disease).

Barrier nursing and most antibiotics will halt the spread of the disease. Anyone trying to sell artefacts may run afoul of the authorities - a license is required to sell them. If S'mrri officials get wind of the discovery, they may try to confiscate them as national treasures.

CyJac

Believed to be a female Lancian datarunner using the tag 'CyJac'. On 211-1113 the perpetrator successfully hacked into the Indiss main dataframe (apparently from the Duchess' own terminal) and implanted a number of personal comments and observations onto the end of certain library data entries. Unfortunately for Indiss CyJac used a self-replicating computer virus to implant the data. Although the main dataframe was eventually cleaned and inoculated, several master copies had already been distributed to other system offices and instantly installed itself into their master copies.

Given the apparently innocent nature of most of the comments (and the fact that many tourists actually preferred infected copies of the Encyclopaedia) total eradication was not considered a high priority.

In reality Indiss have tried to use the opportunity to add some comments of their own, unaware that once sold the infostack is designed to write over the comments and even contains password-protected vaults of additional, covert knowledge.

DASHI, Pact (1723) C55098B-A De Hi Po Asla0 S'mr0 { 2 } (F8C+4) [BB7C] BE -- 404 11 ImDv M2 V

See Port of Call: Dashi (Signal-GK fanzine issue 2)

Depot, Gadde (3121) A31046A-F Ni Da Mr { 2 } (735+4) [667H] B D A 310 13 ImDv M1 V

See Port of Call: Depot (Signal-GK fanzine issue 6)

Davrey, Adim - Famous founder of Chaiklin D'uvri (once a Ziadd Corsair Band).

The Chalice of St. Clair is hidden 'where it belonged amidst the angels. Crucified on an eternal cross where it could forever chastise the fallen one..'

In fact Davrey hid the chalice on the All Saints' Mountain Range on Oewni: The range of active volcanoes all named after Saints (several of whom shared names with Archangels' in the Universalist Church faith) which surround the Lucifer plains of Brimstone. These are the volcanoes of Mount Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael and Azrael.

Many rumours circulate amongst all of the local cultures regarding the inherent evil of the Lucifer plains and local legend has it that God raised up the volcanoes of All Saints to intimidate the power of the devil into submission. Whether or not you are superstitious Lucifer Plains is a depressing area; nothing but brown moss, Oewni serpents and quagmire.

The Chalice remains in an unnamed monks' stone sarcophagus in a small shrine on the rim of St. Michael, which resembles a cross when seen from above with four ridges running at almost 90° from each other and radiating out from the volcano's crater.

Diablo, Kuriishe (2612) C8C8331-A Fl Lo { 0 } (621-4) [1316] B S - 210 12 ImDv K1 I II M 3 V D

The metropolises discovered on Diablo were destroyed by nuclear weapons during the Second Imperium yet no records exist relating to any settlement by any sentients in this system, human or otherwise, has ever been discovered.

In reality the lack of any evidence as to who occupied the planet was due to this being a long established colony of a Vilani slave-owning society that had been raiding and enslaving nearby systems, electing to leave what was an inhospitable planet for more suitable systems before being discovered by the advancing Solomani who were colonising and pacifying numerous nearby systems. The decision was taken by the ruling council to use nuclear weapons to destroy any evidence that might incriminate them at a later date.

There are some ancient Aakhri family records that show that their ancestors had dwelt in what is now the Diablo system for several centuries before moving to Argi.

Drya, Shallows (0820) C99A522-9 Ni Wa { -1 } (943-5) [1415] B - - 202 12 ImDv G2 V

Taken from Legends and Lore:

The Glaniaw Space Station was built in -655 by the Ziadd mercantile Chaiklin (Clan), Khiasq'arr, to orbit the planet Drya as a navigation post. The station, though extremely primitive by modern day standards was, for the most part, completely automated and only required a regular crew of five to run.

Then in -654 the trader `Ariach' jumped into the Drya system and tried, unsuccessfully, to raise the Glaniaw. The station wasn't even beaming out its constant stream of navigational data - it was completely silent; silent as the grave.

When the relief tender `Khu'ch Dia'lk' pulled alongside two rotations later, they found the station deserted but undamaged. All the airlocks were fastened shut, only the hatchway between the dining area and the equipment store hung ajar. The table was set as if a meal was about to begin. Apart from a single overturned chair, everything seemed relatively normal though the room had obviously been deserted for... how long?

The last log entry read ten days before, just as the solar storm was at its height. The rooms were as they must have left them that fateful morning; beds unmade. A Taaka game flashed on one of the computer terminals, awaiting a move that would never come. What happened? That has been, and remains, the question. The entire crew had simply vanished, leaving only the most minimal of clues as to their fate. They could not have left by ship as the station did not have one. The Lifeboat was still berthed and the transponder log failed to show any other ship having contacted the station until the 'Ariach'. There had been however a severe solar storm which had rendered communication with the planet impossible for the last fortnight.

Checks on the station's log revealed that, apparently, the airlocks had never been opened since the visit of the regular monthly supply vessel. Nothing was amiss with the station which could have warranted crew having to go outside. Even if, somehow, the solar storm had blanked out part of the computer log, standard operating procedure meant that at no time would the station be left unmanned. At least one crew member would have remained onboard at all times. Also all of their space suits were accounted for.

Theories of the time suggested that perhaps one of the crew had turned psychotic and murdered the others, somehow jettisoning their bodies into space. The problem with this theory is that the station exerted a small gravitational pull of its own which would have caused the bodies to enter an orbit about the station. Despite an extensive search nothing was ever found. It's as though the five crew members had somehow just vanished into thin air.

A full investigation revealed that one of the crew had apparently been dictating a letter to the computer at the time of the incident. His mysterious last comments have only added to the mystery.. <'.Oh and darling, give little Taali a kiss from me. Tell him I mi... What the!?! Oh, by the clan, what the hell it? Dal! Dal!! Ahhh, it's got me! I'm... '> At this point the record goes quiet.

Internal telemetry however failed to show any other lifeform onboard. At 12:43:05 on the 112th day of -654, a full ten minutes after the message had been recorded the five crew members apparently vanished. Their telemetry signs just blinked out. No-one has ever been able to successfully make any sense out of the final message.

Had something invaded the station there would have been some sign of disturbance, some indication of the attack. There was none; the crew had just suddenly and mysteriously ceased to exist.

<Translated from the original Klatha'sh. (Ziadd)>

Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag Sector By Ishmaga Ershuk

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EDDUM, Bolivar (0531) D797968-6 Hi In Cp Pz Re { 0 } (B88+1) [9956] BEF - A 102 9 ImAp M0 V M2 V

See Port of Call: Eddum (Signal-GK fanzine issue 11)

Elan, Abram

Abram Elan had a latent psionic talent, clairvoyance. His 'vision' was in fact an extension of this enhanced by the additional presence of an unidentified Ancient artefact located at the nearby IISS station.

The artefact was a psionically-controlled densitometer and scanner which had a mineralogical map of Folly stored within. This map had identified a particular area in the Southern mid-latitudes with vast deposits of rare earths.

Shielded by an unusual combination of local rocks, the deposit is concealed and effectively invisible to conventional surveying techniques and equipment. The mineral layer lies at a depth beyond most conventional drilling rigs.

Adventure Hook: The artefact is now stored in an IISS storeroom in the archives – an unusually-shaped anonymous metallic object unlabelled, it ‘calls’ to anyone with a psychic ability giving tantalising image of a location shown from above. If the object is subsequently handled by the psychic, it will communicate directions towards the deposit.

Ersharsa, Iradu (3001) C89A644-A Ni Wa Sa { 0 } (A54-2) [4638] B - - 802 13 ImDv K3 V

See Port of Call: Ersharsa (Signal-GK fanzine issue 12)

Exile Planets of Laraa

The exile camps on Sima and Napu for followers of the Pure Brotherhood remain in operation though the provisional Government on Napu are said to be considering using the Khaanii’s own genocidal practices on the camp inhabitants (who are pure-blood Vilani after all) rather than have to continue to permanently feed and maintain them.

Folly, Khandi (1713) C300459-A Ni Va An { 0 } (B33+1) [546B] B - - 623 12 ImDv M1 V

Folly was visited by the Ancients who left a small group of unadapted humans behind (part of the consignment meant for Medurma). They survived long enough after the Ancients disappeared to interbreed with survivors of a crashed starship during the First Imperium.

Future Promise Enterprises GmbH. <F.P.E.>

Following the scaling down of the asteroid colony on Styx, in the Tarterus system, the cold berth ('Timer') facility was due to be transferred to Diishalum (Shallows 0714). Unfortunately the freighter that chartered to ship the berths was attacked by a privateer on the outer edges of the system. The ship was lost when the power plant core detonated. In the resulting confusion and panic all thoughts of the ship’s original purpose was lost as investigations about the incident got underway.

Important files on the transfer were destroyed accidentally when the starport's cargo tracking system was taken off-line to allow the maximum computer capacity in monitoring the above incident. The zone the Timer centre was located was shut down, leaving twenty-four people in cold sleep.

DagMet have details of the planned transfer on an archive file (miscellaneous business section 904) at their regional headquarters on Diishalum. Locals on Styx will be unable to elaborate on the rumour of the Timer club, but it will be easy to find out about FPE and DagMet's connection.

Gantz, Dr. Karl Immanuel

Dr. Gantz was killed by a nanotech weapon administered by a Drexen hitman, after he had discovered that the company was using his techniques to produce a horrifying range of “plague” nano-forms, in contravention of Imperial Law. His son, Julian Gantz, had already been “bought” by the company, but he had had the foresight to store some of the evidence for his granddaughter, Mana, ordering her computer to reveal it on her sixteenth birthday.

As soon as she received the information, Mana realised her life was in danger. She fled to the only community on Ushra where she would be safe - the Alikasch. She now leads the life of an Alikasch NetDancer, striving to gather sufficient evidence to bring down the company which killed her grandfather.

Gateway, Argi (1331) B98A654-D Ni Ri Wa { 2 } (956+1) [483B] BC N - 701 13 ImDv M1 V M9 V

See Port of Call: Gateway (Signal-GK fanzine issue 1)

GEEHRTAHE

See Contact: The Geehrtah (Signal-GK fanzine issue 2)

Ghost Fleet, The

The transponder readings were actually From a TL16 experimental stealth ship, the ‘Perseus’ which used the signals to cover any accidental discovery during her trials. The transponder is capable of relaying any signal required. The ship, however, was only ever tested between Medurma and Dipa and only used the signal twice before it malfunctioned during a jump and disappeared. The Nexus signals were actually forged by INDISS to create a much needed story.

Gograhah Reivers

Little is known about the Gograhah Reivers other than that they appeared during the period known as the Long Night attacking a number of planets across a couple of subsectors in stolen Vilani ships, crewed by human slaves, attacking settlements with utter savagery. They appeared to be composed on a number of different humanoid or bipedal races some of whom are still unknown to this day yet shared a common yet unknown language and a general shared look (they were always bi-pedal, about 2m high, completely bald and with extremely long arms).

They had little or no understanding of even the most basic of technology and were apparently 'directed' by immoral humans who were willing to do a deal with and advise them in return for a share of the spoils. They were so reliant on their slaves to make their equipment work that at least a couple of their ships were lost due to slaves sabotaging them.

Sometime during the Long Night the Reivers vanished or went extinct and the only evidence of their existence is a single surviving holofilm recording of an attack and their statues and carvings.

In reality, the Gograhah were a single savage, pre-civilisation race native to Nukaush when discovered by the Vilani; a polymorphic life-form, capable of dramatically altering their physical appearance.

Dwelling underground, they were an evolutionary dead-end, in the process of devolving when discovered by the Vilani. Eventually the starships stopped functioning and their slaves died. The few surviving Gograhah not living on Nukaush died out within a generation since only females were warriors and no males had gone off-world.

Given their fluid internal structure, their corpses degraded quickly leaving no traces and their camps had only been roughly built huts and shelters which left little trace. What survived were their carvings, many of which were based on images they had seen in books or images 'taken' during raids.

Other images were copied from images found engraved in the tunnels they discovered deep underneath the Lucifer Lines – tunnels that connect to an extinct Malaach nest.

On Nukaush the remaining Gograhah survived but devolved rapidly. Language was lost, the race shrunk in size over a relatively short period of time. Their unintelligent descendants are what is now known as Jhesters.

Gwi, Shallows (0117) D563430-7 Ni { -3 } (631-5) [1112] B S - 612 14 ImDv M0 V M7 V

Taken from the INDISS news reports: "Smuggler Burnt at Stake"

Earlier today a Smuggler was publically executed in a most barbaric manner for attempting to illegally transport over half a tonne of contraceptives onto Gwi. Tobias Esteban (581, Captain and owner of the 400 tonne free merchantman "A Hard Day's Night" was arrested 9 months ago after Gwi customs officers discovered a hidden compartment onboard his ship stuffed with contraceptives. Esteban was immediately handed over for questioning by House of Inquisition representatives from the Universal Church. Under planetary and church law the illegal importation of such drugs is considered second degree 'infanticide'. Despite pleas from the Sector Government for clemency in this matter, Esteban was sentenced to death last week. This morning Esteban, visibly shaken and withdrawn, was led forth from prison to the nearby Zion Cathedral where several representatives forcibly baptised him into the Universal Faith so that the last rites could be administered. He was then led to Redemption Square in the heart of Gehenna District where he was tied to a stake and administered a path killer though, as dictated by Church law, he was still fully conscious when they lit the fire,

Thousands had gathered to witness the execution, including children who cantered around the burning and screaming man singing nursery songs. Never had this reporter witnessed such a barbaric display: the pain killers had apparently deadened the pain to such an extent that Esteban remained awake for several minutes after he caught fire. One priest commented afterwards that his screams were not at the horror of being burnt alive but at the knowledge that, for his sins, he was about to enter the domain of hell. The Universal Church insists on using this form of execution so that it could remain true to the biblical demand that the Church spills no man's blood. A protest has been lodged by Amnesty intergalactic regarding both the form of execution and the fact that Esteban was forcibly baptised into a faith of which he was not a believer. The planetary government has so far refused to comment on the incident.

Adventure Hook: A group of rebels are looking for a team of off-worlders to undertake drugging the three major water supplies with a long-lasting male contraceptive. This would render the majority of the male population sterile for 18 months, sufficient time to re-establish smugglers willing to set up a regular supply of contraceptives. Given the recent execution, the rebels know that whoever undertakes the raids will need to then leave the system never to return if they value their lives.

Halimaa, Mimu (0301) D6B85AA-8 FI Ni An Fo { -3 } (A41-1) [727A] - S R 612 8 ImDv F7 V

The Halimaanian Magi are the result of the human settlers having been infected by a genetically-modified parasite that stimulates and amplifies psychic ability in its hosts. The Malaach originally bred and genetically altered these parasites to enhance psychic ability in S'mrii victims.

The native diet eaten by all Halimaanians over the centuries mean that when they reach sexual maturity there is a distinct and unique change in the child's body metabolism and they undergo a transformation whereby an excess of alkali in their body tissues alters to a slightly acidic state. Visitors to the planet find the Halimaa diet bitter and unpleasant however Halimaanians require local plants and meat to survive. These biological changes make it possible for the genetically altered Tsochar parasites to live within an adult's body which activates and amplifies their psychic potential until such time that the parasite kills its host, usually in early middle age.

Generally the parasites newly hatched larva enter the adult, attracted by a unique kairomone scent which results from the hormonal changes caused by pubescence, usually through a bodily orifice and gradually make their way to the hosts' brain where it anchors itself and gradually excretes chemicals that enhance psychic ability whilst it eats the hosts brain causing the host to experience violent outbursts and appear to develop the mind-set of a sociopath.

Living off the hosts' blood it grows steadily over a number of years causing the adult mental and physical state to deteriorate and when the damage becomes irreversible, eventually kills its host. Within a few days the parasite will leave the dead body by dissolving a passage into the ear and crawling out. It then lays a batch of eggs, as many as 500 on the human remains and dies. The infant larvae on hatching use the corpse as food until they are sufficiently strong enough to burrow to the surface whereupon they restart the life cycle.

The Malaach that had colonised Halimaa originally ,were exterminated by the Ancients who took over their nests and adapted them to better suit their own needs. The traces they left behind before they themselves moved on centuries later, led the colonists to assume that the underground cities must have been built by the Ancients.

Any off-worlder sleeping on the ground like natives risks being infected by stray Tsochar parasites (since they don't smell of kairomones this only happens occasionally) but the parasite will quickly die due to the host having an incompatible metabolism. The parasite dying will cause severe pain and intense migraines in its victim whilst it dies and its presence will not enhance the hosts' psychic abilities.

To off-worlders, adults suddenly gain immense psychic ability after maturity. This includes an ability to generate a powerful psychic 'scream' that will affect everyone who isn't infected. They also undergo a major and dramatic personality change. If the hosts' diet changes (due to being off-world for example) their parasite will go dormant, blocking the hosts' psychic abilities unless the host experiences a massive adrenalin surge whereupon it will awaken and release a powerful psychic 'scream'.

HAMARAN

See Contact: Hamaran (Signal-GK fanzine issue 4)

Hellas, Ushra (1416) A55567C-C Ag Ni Asla0 { 2 } (B56+5) [988F] BC -- 603 6 ImDv M3 V

See Port of Call: Hellas (Signal-GK fanzine issue 3)

IIRADU, Iiradu (3008) A542A9A-F He Hi In Po Cp { 4 } (C9G+5) [CE7H] BEF -- 900 9 ImDv M3 V

A major smuggling ring operates from Iiradu undermining its efforts to raise its citizens quality of life. The smugglers are successfully evading any import and export duties and the Customs officials have been unable to find or halt them. In reality one of the chief trade committee members is receiving substantial bribes in return for ensuring that the smugglers outwit the authorities.

JALA'LAK <Nivsa-Therapsid Paramammalia Yetiforme>

See Contact: Jala'lak (Signal-GK fanzine issue 1)

Although native to Uaam (0940). Jala'Lak can also be found on Giirakh (0325). The reason is because some Shassahrhi (Malaach) had discovered the race during the Ancients War and wanted to test them to confirm their ability to produce the necessary PBT. The Malaach established a series of psychic 'Talking' Temples to attract the Jala'Lak and condition them to gather together in open locations ready for harvesting. Over the period of a couple of years, hundreds of adult Jala'Lak, who were sufficiently healthy enough to survive transportation were stunned, captured whilst at the temples and taken to the Malaach transport.

When the Malaach had gathered the equivalent of several tribes of Jala'Lak it was decided to transport them back to their nest on Nox. The decision was taken to leave the temples on automatic to condition the rest of the Jala'Lak to get in the habit of gathering together in preparation for their return.

The Malaach transport was ambushed by a Droyne warship whilst refuelling forcing it to misjump. The ship arrived in the Giirakh system severely damaged, the ships' life support was no longer capable of supporting that many lifeforms so the crew set down on the surface and released its cargo into the wild to fend for themselves. Not willing to completely abandon their cargo, they established another series of talking temples on this world ready for when they returned to collect the Jala'Lak and jumped out never to return.

The Jala'Lak on what we now know as Giirakh suffered sufficient trauma from their experiences, re-enforced by the psychic temples that they became generally more hostile and warlike as a result.

It is likely that long-term exposure to the Talking Temples increased the races sentience.

Joker's Tower, The

Taken from Legends and Lore:

Nox has always been a mystery planet. When it was first discovered in -9021 the atmosphere was heavily tainted. This appeared to be caused by industrial pollutants, yet no sign of planetary civilisation, past or present, could be found. None that is, except for the 1,550 metre high mound on the Gradaach plain.

The original survey team left with the mystery unsolved. A Vilani colony was established in -8350 Subsequent exploration of the Mound discovered it was a magnetic anomaly it affected magnetic compasses within a 6 Kilometre radius. The Mound had definitely not been formed by any natural geological action. Was this a remnant of the Ancients? There was nothing to connect that race with this mystery, either then or now. Research teams attempted to drive probes into the base, they broke! Whatever it was composed Of Was as tough as diamond. After some of the soil had been cleared away, it was discovered that the actual mound was composed of a unique, dense crystalline structure almost black in colour. Could there be the remnants of an advanced civilisation beneath it? Actual exploration of the exterior was complicated by the fact that the caverns at the peak were the home to a large colony of Noxian Spiders. Could they have been the mounds creators? They are, after all, the highest known pinnacle of Noxian evolution. Neural Activity Sensors however revealed them to be non-sentient before the researchers could continue; members of the team began to vanish. In one extremely well documented case, a worker had just detonated explosives in the futile hope of breaching the crystalline structure of the mound. It, like all subsequent attempts, failed. He was seen to step forwards and then vanished in mid-step. The body was later found in the caverns at the top of the mound - dead. The body was physically undamaged; death was caused by a massive cerebral haemorrhage. These disappearances always seemed to occur after an attempt was made to obtain samples. Despite attempts to use robots to do the actual mining. People up 10 several kilometres distant still vanished. Later surveys were made using densitometers with no success. Each reading came out different. In -1203, an entomologist from Ushra, Kevin Saulteen, discovered that the Noxian Spider was actually capable of spinning weak crystalline substance that they used to bind their victims. He subjected the substance to intense radiation and found that it caused the structure to compact; at last the mystery of the tower's construction appeared to have been solved. Or was it?

Saulteen later estimated that it would take the radiation of a supernova exploding at ground level to harden the spider's web into the superdense crystal of the Tower. He also estimated it would take 23 billion spiders working for 2,000 years non-stop to produce enough initial webbing to create it. Nor did the theory explain the disappearances or inability to take accurate sensor readings. Although scientists seem to accepted Saulteen's explanation there has been no official answer as to why the spiders would have built we now know as Joker's Tower.

What is more unlikely? That a non-sentient species, such as the spiders, created the Tower, or that it was created by a highly evolved race, now extinct? Like so many of Dagudashaag's mysteries, the Tower only makes sense once we accept the existence of such a race in the Sector's pre-history. This race I call the Malaach....

Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag Sector By Ishmaga Ershuk

Extract from Chapter 6 - The Malaach Conspiracy.

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Kassandra, liradu (3208) C898411-9 Ni Pa Da { -1 } (932-5) [1315] Bc - A 612 10 ImDv K7 V

There is an Ancient site in the system but it is buried deep within the star's atmosphere. Recent research has suggested that the star may have two cores, produced by some form of collision in the distant past between Sharik and a second, much smaller star. In fact the mysterious 'second core' is the remains of an Ancients device used to refuel the star – an early attempt at stellar engineering.

Kassandritus

The head researcher from the University of Nimlakim Biochemistry Department (Dr. Ergii Kaskil) is so wrapped up in attempting to solve the puzzle of Kassandritus that he is turning to immoral (not to mention illegal) means to advance his research. Kaskil has been buying human test subjects from various sources throughout Dagudashaag to help him to test experimental vaccines.

Adventure Hook: Kaskil has been exposing the subjects to the disease and trying the vaccines on them which has only resulted in a number of corpses to be secretly disposed of. Kaskil is getting increasingly desperate and is having to resort to even more shady means of acquiring new test subjects.

Khikaeg, Shallows (0212) D565643-6 Ag Ni Ri { -1 } (853-4) [3523] BC S - 504 11 ImDv M1 V

Taken from the INDISS news reports: "Daring Rescue of Aphrodite"

At a news conference held by the Imperial Navy, a press spokesperson admitted that the Navy had authorised a Beta-7 Covert Action Team (CAT) to carry out a rescue of a female prisoner from Khikaeg last year. The action was carried out without loss of life on either side and was in response to Khikaeg's refusal to release an unnamed Naval Officer into the custody of the Navy after she had been imprisoned on a charge of unlawfully seducing a member of the Universal Church into committing an act of adultery.

The Navy spokesperson stated that the prisoner was being held at the time in a House of Inquisition and was being systematically tortured in the hope that she would confess her 'sins'. The rescued officer, a Scanian, was accused of being an 'Ursimgan Aphrodite', apparently because of her race, and had been imprisoned after the man with whom she had had the affair claimed that she had forced him to have sex with her against his will. Church representatives on Khikaeg have refused to comment.

KIAKH'IEE <Ardemala Domesticans Mimaes>

Kiakh'iee are small, furry and insufferably cute. They are also smarter than the IISS thinks - some individuals are almost as intelligent as the average human. They communicate with their "owners" in short phrases of InterLanguage in a "cute animal" voice, though the smarter ones are excellent mimics, and enjoy using this ability to cause mischief. This can be a real problem if they've been exposed to too much human holovision.

Kimaria, Arnakhish (1809) DD543210-5 Lo Po { -3 } (411-5) [1111] B - - 614 8 ImDv M2 I V M1 V M9 V

The descendants of the farmers of the agri-domes are still living on Kimaria or rather under it. Once the life-support systems failed through a lack of spare parts, the people began to move together which further put a strain on the resources of the remaining habitable domes. Many of the farmers died, but several small groups round the natural cavern systems beneath their agri-domes were filled with breathable air, and these was food of sorts to be found. The underworld. Kirnarlans have regressed to a state of semi-cannibalistic barbarism. where their meagre food rations of local fungi and rodents is supplemented by the occasional human victim.

But there is a price to pay for their survival beyond their cultural and moral regression. Most of the natural lifeforms that live under the surface of Kimaria are laced with anagathic-like compounds. from the bacteria and filamentous fungi that grow and synthesise the basic building blocks of the food chain in their sulphurous hot springs to the more complex animal forms that hunt in the dark. All are saturated with these chemicals. One animal of note is the rodent-like Kimiat (at it is known to the subterranean locals) which although carnivorous feeds heavily on some of the fungi that have the highest concentrations of anagathic. For it feeds on them not for food but for the anagathic itself which it uses as a powerful poison, stored in sub-mandibular sacs and injected into its prey. The underground Kimarians fed upon the Kimiat in turn but take care to remove the sacs before consumption. despite this they still consume huge quantities of anagathic-like chemicals. The consequence of this is that they are very long-lived (some are nearly a thousand years old) and have reduced capacity to think intelligently, see and reproduce. Most have a sickly grey colour to their skin. have little hair and stooping gait. They are barely human.

Adventure Hook: A local prospector accidentally discovered the caverns of the Kimarians. During a brief exploration he was bit by one of the Kimiat he had unintentionally cornered. Rapidly succumbing to the anagathic poisoning (equivalent to a massive overtime) he called over his ship's radio for assistance. The first on the scene was the captain of the 'Hayan Rose' who was able to obtain the facts before he lost sense (then consciousness). He died shortly after on the way to a medical centre at Kimaria's starport. The official cause of death was recorded as 'total systematic shock and heart failure brought about through anagathic poisoning, probably due to incorrect self-administering of Impure product'. The captain never contradicted the evidence. After a suitable time the captain returned to Kimaria caverns to investigate and came away with a couple of Kimiat carcasses. Analysis by some 'friends' with access to (drug) laboratories confirmed the captain's hypothesis that the creatures were a rich natural source of raw anagathic. The two animals contained enough anagathic pre-cursor to make 40 standard doses! With further backing from the illegal trade the captain and his crew made a visit once every two months for the last year collecting about 60 to a 100 of the animals each time.

It was during the last visit that the crew were attacked and ambushed by the Kimarians. This attack resulted in the death of Scarlan, a chemist in the employ of one of the regional drug cartels backing the project.

The cartel now wants to hire specialists to resolve the issue of the Kimarians one way or another.

LANCIAN

See Contact: Lancians (Signal-GK fanzine issue 4)

LENASHUUK, Argi (1640) A7A8A76-F Fl Hi In Pz { 5 } (C9H+4) [9F4E] BEf W A 400 12 ImDv K7 I II

Sector Duke Raegis Viisarikaa IV was assassinated by agents of Archduke Dulinor of Llelesh, who wished to destabilise the Sector in preparation for his bid for the Imperial throne. Duchess Karyn Viisarikaa is currently unaware of this fact.

Luken, Laraa (3037) C543589-9 Ni Po { -1 } (A43+1) [646A] B - - 103 14 ImDv K2 V

Many of the mines are starting to prove unviable to maintain and as a result unemployed adults are starting to move back to the cities. This is being resisted by the youth who have started a terrorist campaign against the Oo-di's as they call anyone over the age of 16. Using their superior knowledge of the cities, the youth have captured some of hand-held weaponry and have plans to take over control of the city food reservoirs in the near future.

Lundqvist, The

See SI'FTA <Sesh-Ifaen Freight Tractors Ag>

The "Lundqvist" was the name of a Donosiev-class IISS survey ship that has become infamous in Ushra subsector. The vessel was lost in the Kaagashgiir system in late 1106. The exact circumstances of its loss have remained a mystery. The vessel had been dispatched to the rescue of a navy courier the "Allaouun" which has lost power soon after jumping into the system. Contact with the vessel were lost as the ships slipped behind the large gas giant Bakuk. Twenty-five minutes later only the Lundqvist emerged from the shadow of the gas giant: a garbled distress signal was broadcast claiming that the ship was under attack from 'invisible' forces. The captain of the vessel was almost totally incoherent - there were screams in the Background and the sounds of fighting. Psychologists analysing the recordings of the incident concluded that the officer delivering the message was bordering on the insane. Fear, panic and extreme agitation were the principal emotions prevalent on the recordings. The Lundqvist then drifted back into the shadow of the gas giant and again contact was lost... for the final time. An IN cruiser (awaiting the arrival of the courier) was dispatched to investigate, but on arrival at the gas giant no trace of either vessel was found. A system search was initiated but to no avail.

Three weeks later following this mysterious and tragic incident a vessel giving the transponder code of the Lundqvist was picked up in the Antioch system. Within seconds of the transponder signal arriving at a ground-based tracking station, a garbled distress message was broadcast on the emergency frequency. Before anyone could react the message was cut off abruptly. No sign of any vessel could be found. Examination of the ground-S base broadcast recording log identified the distress message as identical to that sent out at Kaagashgiir. Seven more weeks passed before there was a repeat of this second incident at Tethys (1114). There was a major difference however - only after the initial excitement of the appearance of the Lundqvist did system authorities note that a free trader which was heading in-system had disappeared. Its last known position was only 500,000km away from the location of the mysterious transponder signal, 15 minutes before that signal.

The media throughout the subsector got hold of all the details (and made a few more up besides) of the mysterious ship and the (apparently) linked disappearances of trading vessel. The Lundqvist was dubbed the "Ghost Ship of Ushra". Further detection of the distress message (always the same) and further inexplicable losses of merchants has set the whole subsector to panic - traders and travellers alike. The popular tale is that the appearance of the "Ghost" or "death" ship the Lundqvist is a paranormal sign that some innocent vessel will be lost. The panic has led to a slump in freight and passenger transport, as well as the number of ships that will travel in certain regions of the subsector (especially in the Tethys Triangle, extending between Lambda Cygni, Hakukuk and Ushra). Those that are willing to fly their vessels through this area can command high prices. Insurers are now asking higher premiums from even the major carriers as the list of lost vessel grows longer. To date no-one is able to cast any light on the incidents: the Bureau of Parapsychic Phenomenon at Shakhamish University (Gushemege 2716) are offering a prize of Cr.750,000 for positive proof of the existence of a parapsychic cause for the loss of the ships. The Polytechnic of Argiluu is offering half a million credits for proof that the whole sequence of events has been due to a more rational cause.

Referee's Information: The whole story concerning the Lundqvist and the missing ships is one of piracy, betrayal and murder. The Lundqvist is still in operation by its original crew plus two members of the navy courier crew. The original incident at Kaagashgiir was planned by the captains of both the vessels. The two captains had a friendship that went back many years. The captain of the courier was given the task of carrying a load of government gold: some MCr. 40 worth. He passed this information to his friend with an idea to steal the gold. The Lundqvist's commander approached his crew in a round-about manner and received a positive response.

The courier's captain did not receive such an enthusiastic response from his crew and thus decided to act on his own. The courier's captain sabotaged the courier's power plant which exploded shortly after emerging from jump. The Lundqvist was in a convenient position to be the first on the scene. The scout ship sent over a team on the pretext of assisting the courier's rescue but in fact set about eliminating the crew and transferring the gold to the Lundqvist. Part of the struggle was accidentally recorded by the Lundqvist's scanners and re-broadcast to the rest of the system, which inadvertently added to the authenticity of the message.

In the shadow of the gas giant the Lundqvist, its crew and the gold jump out system before any vessels could get anywhere near the incident site. The courier had been sent on a collision course with the heart of the gas giant in an effort to eliminate all the evidence of the theft. The Lundqvist made the journey to Antioch (1117) where it refuelled at an icy comet on the outer fringes of the system. It broadcast the 'distress' message just before the vessel jumped to confuse the authorities.

The Lundqvist's crew enjoyed the easy pickings to be had from robbery/piracy and decided to undertake it in and around Ushra subsector. The Lundqvist currently operates out of a hollowed-out asteroid in the Undim system (0914).

MEDURMA, Pact (2124) A9D7954-C Hi An Cs Di(Miyavine) Asla1 S'mr0 { 3 } (G8E+1) [7C3A] BEF -- 823 12 ImDv G0 V

See Port of Call: Medurma (Signal-GK issue 2)

The Ancients arrived at Medurma at about -350,000, bringing with them Human specimens. The Humans were settled at some three locations around the planet. This group of Droyne was a research team investigating instantaneous communications. An asteroid station was set up in stationary, orbit around Medurma, and equipped with extensive tachyon transceiver systems. A plant from another system was geneered to act as a psionic receiving system and cultured at DeepLevel.

Tachyons received at the orbital station were turned into psions (which are sub-light particles) and beamed to this "living antenna", where the signals were decoded. The Droyne planned to geneer the Humans, so that they could tend the plants at DeepLevel, but this project was interrupted by the Final War.

Luckily, damage to Medurma during the Final War was relatively slight. The asteroid station was utterly disintegrated, as were the base facilities at DeepLevel, but the psionic plants, and the Humans survived. A number of half-mile-wide craters bear witness to the rain of debris onto Medurma - the largest of these now forms the site of the Jacqueline J. Martin Starport Facility.

A small number of Chirpers survived for a few millennia on Ambrym, but eventually died out (partly because of their small gene pool), leaving virtually no trace.

MMSL <Medurma Main StarLines>

The company is secretly owned through a number of shell corporations by Prince Lucan. He uses the company as a way to smuggle his sleeper agents into the Sector. Unfortunately for Lucan, InSec knows about it and are secretly tagging all agents and feeding them false information.

Mershemu, Laraa (3231) D580411-7 De Ni { -3 } (631-5) [1113] B - - 903 12 ImDv G2 V

The Iron Fist freeport (a damaged Azhanti High Lightning Class Fleet Intruder) was in fact illegally sold fully armed and equipped even down to a consignment of shuttles still in their hangar bays. The Tiao' Ocelot is now doing their best to disguise their weaponry so that visiting officials are unable to confirm the illegal elements of the purchase.

Miir, Argi (1534) A65A687-E Ni Wa Scan5 Bwap3 { 1 } (E55+1) [675E] B - - 224 9 ImDv M3 V M5 V

The Gaerkh are not an intelligent species, merely tool using. Clubs are only used for hunting, not migration. (Those Gaerkh seen with clubs were on a hunt prior to attempting their seasonal migration, which leads them directly through the Scanian/ Bwap cities.) Only the deep jungle hunters are aware that Gaerkh have always used clubs, but they have never felt the need to report it.

MIMU, Mimu (0208) A583AC9-F Hi Pz (S'mrii)7 (Kiakh'iee)3 { 3 } (H9F+4) [BD6G] BE - A 314 8 ImLc F8 V

See Port of Call: Mimu (Signal-GK fanzine issue 5)

The S'mrii disdain overt physical violence. Disputes over precedence and rights between phyla are resolved in "Net combat", where one phylum attempts to prove its intellectual superiority by penetrating the other's defences. The last global war on Mimu took place in 1109 between Phylum Kiaskui and Phylum Kiaatrukr, the two most powerful on the planet. It lasted just over eight seconds, and its sole significant casualty was Kiaatrukr's Director of Commercial Operations (Tansa), who got stuck in a lift when the power to their phylum headquarters in Chussria' mysteriously failed. Pity the poor Human netranner who gets caught in the middle.

Taken from Legends and Lore: Weeping Spire of Zaa'mikh, The

Two hundred kilometres north of the modern provincial city of IaShassahhrhir stands one of the most spectacular and moving monuments of the Vilani subjugation of Mimu, made more remarkable in that it was created by the Vilani themselves. In -5.287, a strike cruiser of the Ziru Sirka Grand Fleet launched a thermal-boosted nuclear weapon against the S'mrii city of Zaa'mikh. A horrific weapon intended to cause uncontrollable firestorms in Mimu's dense atmosphere, the thermalnuke produced an intense heat flash which laid waste to the city. An ancient city thronged with refugees from the Vilani landings further south was instantly converted into an undulating sea of radioactive glass. This would have been little different from other

atrocities during the Consolidation Wars. Had it not been for a sheer fluke of nature. The thermal nuclear weapon detonated at an altitude of two kilometres, precisely over the Kiarik Kiira Com-Relay, a five hundred metre high ferrocrete broadcasting tower. The surface of the tower was completely melted, but the structure somehow remained standing; fused pinnacle of marbled glass seemingly organic to the holocaustic landscape around it, the Weeping Spire is so named because it's very apex seems to resemble an S'mrii face turned towards the sky, weeping in pain.

For millennia, the Spire could only be viewed from the air in specially shielded vehicles, as the surface remained highly radioactive. Nuclear damper sleds provided by the Rule of Man military made Zaa'mikh safe once more. On the 244th day of the year -1947, the entire Executive Council of Phylum Kiaskui stood in the open air on the fused glass of Zaa'mikh and stared in silent reverence at the Weeping Spire. This day was of such intense spiritual significance to the S'mrii that the Kiaskui Phylum Date system takes it to be its zero date.

In 552, during engineering work to reinforce the Spire's structure, a densitometric scan disclosed a small cache ten metres underground, to the south of the Spire. Careful excavation revealed a time capsule from just before the First Holocaust, with many domestic items, including several newspapers in the original languages.

Taken from Legends and Lore: The Legend of the Lost Status

According to the AAB (Argushiigi Admegulasha Bilanidin) a Major Race is defined as "any race which achieves interstellar travel through its own means". This has been further clarified as meaning achieving inter-stellar travel by means of the jump drive.

It is by this definition that the Droyne are classed as a major race despite the fact they seldom now build or use jump drives while the S'mrii who colonised several stars prior to their discovery are classed as a "minor" race. The S'mrii had discovered the principles of space flight thousands of years before the Vilani, however they never discovered the principle of the Jump drive. Or did they? If we were now to discover that the S'mrii were in reality, a major race it would cause all sorts of political upheaval; not least because these facts hadn't been discovered before now. It is my belief that certain Vilani governors carried out a cover-up of the very information I'm about to present; possibly even committing murder. In the mind of this author, no other answer is possible.

The story starts at the famous Weeping Spire of Zaa'mikh on Mimu where a small time capsule was discovered in 552. Inside was a newsfax article written in ancient Ssiarkuku. It showed diagrams of a S'mrii probe that was to be tested in -25,791. Unfortunately that was the year of the S'mrii holocaust war. The diagrams, while interesting, were mainly of the ship's exterior except for one small diagram which shows amazing similarities to early jump field generators. Without a translation of the text there was no way to know for certain. Then in 654 a Vilani clerk called Shenar Kuggukhe claimed to have discovered a Ssiarkuku to Iakzikhhu dictionary in the Vilani embassy library. Here was a known language, a recognisable ancestor to New Interlanguage! At the conference he publicly translated several passages of the newspaper which proved to be a scientific review.

His translated passages proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that the probe contained a new prototype engine, one that we now know as a jump drive. Unfortunately before the conference had finished Kuggukhe took fright and ran from the news conference with the dictionary and his transcription notes. That was the last anyone ever saw of him or the dictionary. The Vilani Embassy immediately disavowed all knowledge of Kuggukhe and even went as far as to claim that he'd never worked for them despite the massive amount of documented proof to the contrary. The Imperium went to enormous lengths at the time to play the story down as a confidence trick. Then in 755 a S'mrii archaeologist produced documentary proof that the "Weeping Spire

Probe" as it was known had actually been launched and had been scheduled to test its new prototype engines two days before the holocaust. The results of that test and what finally happened to the probe has never been discovered. The original newsfax now rests in the Zeessia'mr museum, still apparently untranslated and almost forgotten. A small piece of paper that could mean the difference between minor or major status for the whole S'mrii race...

Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag Sector by Ishmaga Ershuk

Extracted from Chapter 3 - The Major Race that Never Was

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Mindahm, Bolivar (0733) C4367BA-9 Pz Sa { 0 } (D69+2) [977B] B - A 704 12 ImDv M1 V M6 V

Deep under the ice in the southern temperate zone is a lost Vilani geological research base, which has been buried for nearly five thousand years following an avalanche. In reality the avalanche was caused by a deliberate explosion intended to permanently seal the base to avoid releasing a prehistoric and deadly virus into the atmosphere.

Unfortunately the majority of the base survived the explosion and the subsequent avalanche intact. The scientists had been investigating ice cores when they accidentally unleashed the deadly virus previously sealed within the ice into the base air filtration system. This killed painfully within minutes of infection and was airborne. Unable to fight the infection in time the scientists decided to permanently seal the research base off. However the base still includes a number of ice cores containing the ancient and deadly virus which has lain dormant for thousands of years but which if thawed out was still capable of reanimating and decimating the planetary population.

Minor Races

What remains undocumented is that a number of sentient and pre-sentient races in Dagudashaag all share a racial phobia – against spider and scorpion-like creatures. This is a racial memory of assaults by the Shassahrhi (Malaach) on the S'mrii, Hamaran and though it is currently undocumented, also on the Jala'Lak of Giirakh.

MIYAVINE - Extinct Minor Human Race (Medurma 2124)

The Miyavine minor human race shared the fate of many who were incautious when dealing with Ancient technology. They had developed pressure suits which enabled them to survive for extended periods at DeepLevel, and a number of expeditions were made. On one of these expeditions they recovered a number of puzzling artefacts.

One of which unfortunately carried an Ancient-geneered retrovirus. The virus had no immediately obvious symptoms, apart from causing progressive sterility. By -18,700 the Miyavine had simply aged and died out.

M'NENGI

See Contact: M'Nengi (Signal-GK issue 8)

Niirkhi, Shallows (0613) B657794-A Ag Ga { 4 } (E6D+2) [5B38] BCf W - 205 9 ImDv G1 V M2 V

Agents in the pay of one of the Diishalum conglomerates are actively involved in the sabotaging of the trade negotiations. There has been one Incident of attempted kidnapping of an Irphothe trade delegate. In response to this extreme Niirkhian farmers hijacked and destroyed an empty DiishaJum transporter (there has been no conclusive proof discovered by police as to the perpetrators of either crime but most parties are certain they now who is responsible). The situation has reached such tense levels that mercenaries are now being employed by Diishalum traders, and armed customs officials are now routinely boarding and searching all ships entering or leaving the starport. Armed conflict is a dangerous possibility.

Nukaush, Arnakhish (1906) B684400-9 Ni Pa HamaW { 0 } (B33-4) [1414] Bc N - 923 8 ImDv M2 V

See Port of Call: Nukaush (Signal-GK issue 10)

See Gograhahh Reivers .

Oewni, Shallows (0216) B564466-9 Ni Pa Mr { 0 } (A33-1) [3448] Bc S - 422 7 ImDv K5 V M2 V M5 V

See Port of Call: Oewni (Signal-GK issue 9)

'Princess Alianthe', CA-91

The last sighting of the "Princess A" was a report placing her over the Ducal Summer Palace on Kedden on 132-1112 at 15:17 hours. It vanished suddenly whilst still apparently in the system's atmosphere. There are those who claim its presence was to foretell a major disaster that was likely to befall the Imperium.

It should be noted that Emperor Strephon will be assassinated at 15:17 local time, 132-1116 on Capital.

Proytheyath, Laraa (3238) B558831-8 Pa Ph Droy3 { 0 } (E78-4) [4814] Bce - - 313 16 ImDv K1 V M5 V

Hard-line Droyne activists have begun a campaign of destruction against all the new development plans. Many of the older Droyne have distanced themselves from this radical group although a larger section of Droyne are convinced that the elite, non-elected government have been bought by corporate interests. There are a few human sympathisers supporting the Droyne as well as support from visiting Oyntrip.

Reshumirak, The Remnants (1025) C400534-9 Ni Va (Domination) Sa { -1 } (A43-3) [3437] B - - 103 14 ImDv K8 V

See Port of Call: Reshumirak (Signal-GK fanzine issue 13)

Three short adventure ideas for Reshumirak – The Good, The Bad & The Ugly

1. The Good

The PC's are approached by a distressed father who wants to hire them to discredit a local 'In'. The In, an apparent rider called Michael/Angel has developed quite a cult following over the last year, including the man's only daughter, a beautiful 18 year-old called Melicsa. Recently Michael/Angel has taken to selecting twenty of his most beautiful followers (generally young males and females over the age of consent) and takes them off-world. None are ever heard from again.

Melicsa has been selected for the next journey and will not hear anything bad against Michael/Angel, pointing out that due to constant video-feed from his cameras the man's life is an open book. The father has Cr. 20,000 to pay anyone who can expose him publicly for the fraud he really is.

Background: Reshumirak is still in the throes of its style-led revolution. Everywhere you go there are giant viewscreens trying to convert you to their style of life. Merchandisers inundate you with offers to make you resemble the latest in-crowd. The media leaders, In's as they are most commonly known, participate in a constant all-out ratings war. The In's each cultivate a distinct sub-culture of followers around themselves, each with their own particular rituals and fashions, though each of the followers will attempt to rise through the 'hero-worship' hierarchy by creating a unique personality within the constraints of the cult.

Few are willing to risk the possibility of being total ostracised by being completely unique. Each personality sect wear identifying badges that only holds meaning for other insiders.

Reshumirak's spend a great deal of time in each other's company and are highly responsive to the influence of their peers. Those with either a high charisma or are currently in the centre of media attention, are idolised by those who dream themselves of being the centre of attention. This medley of the need to belong and the need to be unique colours every aspect of Reshumirak life.

Everywhere you go you will see people surrounded by a horde of small imported grav-cameras or, if not so rich, by a couple of ancient sensor drones recording every aspect of their lives. Those who haven't yet made it either spend their spare time working on adapting their image in preparation for the day they 'make it' or working on editing that day's shoot on their editing suites. Everywhere reflects an obsession with personality and belonging.

Background: Michael/Angel is not a rider; the 'barnacle' on his chest is simply cosmetic. He is involved in selling his followers off-world to pleasure houses in other subsectors and is using his 'icon' personae to make his victims come of their own accord. He maintains the illusion of his religious zeal by feeding taped sessions while he goes about his 'real' life. PC's watching his video feeds for more than a few days will realise that Michael's sleeping patterns are identical every night - his followers are fed a recording whenever he slips out of his *Angel* personae. If the PC's can obtain footage of Michael's 'extracurricular' activities, they will be able to persuade Melicsa that Michael/Angel is a fraud. This will probably result in her transferring her hero worship to one of the PC's who 'so valiantly rescued her.'

2. *The Bad*

The PC's are hired by a merchandiser firm to damage the reputation of one of their rivals, Coco deBelle Inc. They want the PC's to fake footage of their latest 'icon', Maranu being involved in a crime. It must be a heinous crime, committed publicly for it to be accepted completely.

Background: In order to computer-generate a fake video feed it will be necessary to obtain additional footage of the intended scene of the crime from the viewpoint of all the public cameras (everywhere in Paris-unda'Re has cameras, though the activate randomly) and pre-generate the 'icon' committing the crime in advance. They then need to find a way to intercept the camera signals so they can be doctored and then commit a real crime, duplicating the actions they have made Maranu take exactly to enable them to superimpose him onto the feeds. Unfortunately there will be 'In's' present with their own cameras and at least one will 'escape'. The PC's will have to track the camera down and edit it before it goes public.

Note that most Reshumirak's will assume that the feeds must be correct even if they personally saw someone else commit the crime.

3. *And the Ugly*

The PC's have accidentally upset Remuk/Red Eye and he has elected to have some 'fun' with them. He will 'flre' a servitor seed into one of the PC's which will alter their genetic structure not unlike leprosy.

Background: Remuk/Red Eye started out as Delphi/Red Eye, the first human Rider. Unfortunately Delphi was injured during a tunnel collapse in 911. Try as they could the symbiot could not repair the damage caused by the rock fall.

Red Eye, realising that Delphi was about to die, immediately struck a deal with an old miner in the crowd. Reconstituting itself, Red Eye pulled itself free. The trauma was the final blow for Delphi who died within minutes.

Red Eye then merged there and then with the miner, Alun Demos (98) only to discover that the host's body was infested with a fungal poison. Demos/Red Eye battled to combat the infection but it was too far gone. The symbiot could prevent any further progression of the illness but even they couldn't repair the damage. It is now believed that the strain of combating the disease, combined with Demos' heavy drug use, drove Red Eye completely insane. Twenty years later, Red Eye abandoned Demos to die in a back alley and merged with a local human crime lord called Remuk.

Today, Remuk/Red Eye runs many of the illegal activities on Reshumirak. They are known to be cruel, intelligent and utterly paranoid. However, most people find them extremely good company, intellectually stimulating if exceedingly touchy.

The merging always results in a swollen red-coloured right eye; Red Eye's distinctive trade mark as he takes over his host's right eye to enable it to still remain personally aware of its surroundings. Remuk has tattooed his face to help disguise the marks left by the merger. Red Eye has not fully merged with its current host, preferring to retain part of itself as a functioning individual just (in case it needs to flee again).

Unlike most Riders, this means that Remuk/Red Eye more closely resembles a schizophrenic rather than a merged personality.

Remuk is a tall and once handsome middle-aged man. Business-like, he always seems to remain calm and in control even when he is torturing someone. He is always polite and soft spoken; his biggest weakness is a wandering (left) eye for human females.

Red Eye cannot control the PC through the seed without putting itself at risk; however it can use the seed to adapt the PC's DNA. Even if the other PC's attempt to remove the seed immediately, they will find that it will have 'sprouted' nerve tendrils throughout the PC's body and would require a major operation to remove. Should the operation be successful, however, the genetic damage will have been started and the mutation will continue. The only 'cure' is to obtain forgiveness from Remuk/Red Eye and hope they will use the seed (provided it hasn't already been removed) to reverse the damage. Of course, there will be a price to pay!

Rothery, Dr. Middleton

Dr. Rothery did, in fact, find a mummified S'mrii corpse. Unfortunately he instantly jumped to the wrong conclusions and failed to notice the clues that pointed to the base actually being constructed by another race – 'The Malaach', who had achieved TL18 before their final destruction at the hands of the Ancients. The S'mrii "hit team" are in fact a group of S'mrii scientists who wish to question him further about his discoveries.

Sanheichiir <Göheimsan: 'Little Knives of the Mind'>

The Scanians have not rejected psionics and the Sanheichiir have not died out. In addition to training on Abbayi there are several selective breeding programmes underway on non-Akivan soil and in this way a sizeable army of psychic warriors has been created.

In 799 a second Psionics Institute was established at Abbayi. The Scanian colony there was extremely small and new trainees arrived dressed in the dark cloaks of the Nehutei and trained psionics left in their place so the population at Ma'kot remained stable. Only Rabban who had achieved the rank of Sanhedra Rabbai were tested and only those who would not be missed were sent. In addition the Scanian's have a large population of unadapted followers that the Imperial's seem to forget are totally Scanian in mind and ideal. Once the Centre was established, training of the Sanheichiir (Little Knives of the Mind) resumed in earnest. Each Scanian Sanhedra tests for psionic potential and those found trustworthy are sent to the Centre for further testing. In addition, selective breeding programs at several off-planet colonies have built up a sizable army of Sanheichiir in readiness for whatever the future might bring.

Dutchess Karyn has been informed by InSec of the possible existence of Sanheichiir but they have been unable to confirm it and they do not know where the Institute may be hidden.

When she was appointed Sector Duchess a select group of 4 Scanian bodyguards were appointed by the Sanhedra to act as her personal bodyguard. This action didn't go down well with Karyn's personal guard, Dunbar's Dragons.

This rivalry has resulted in the bodyguard attachment being kept at a distance. This alienation has resulted in the Scanians going about their appointed task in a rather unorthodox manner. Karl Ragoul, an unadapted Scanian has even formed close bonds with several Alikasch street gangs. In particular the Eihkiylreakhu gang are in very close contact with Karl and act as his eyes and ears on Medurma

Unknown to anyone at Court, these are trained Sanheichiir who are absolutely loyal to the Duchess and the Ducal Throne. Given Karyn's own prejudice against psionics no-one has been informed of their abilities.

Karyn has appointed Carl Tarrant to liaise with the Scanian Sanhedra at this time.

Saven, Laraa (3240) A5A0734-D He { 2 } (D6D+1) [593B] B N - 613 11 ImDv G2 I V

Deep in the southern desert, close to the Khahaan mountain range is a crashed liner, the 'Golden Tiger'. The vessel went missing in 1008 after a misjump with a full complement of passengers and crew.

Most died when the ship exited jumpspace close to Saven. Severely damaged, powerless and leaking atmosphere and unable to send out a distress signal, the ship crashed into the surface of the planet far from civilisation.

Less than two dozen passengers and crew are still living and at the crash site, most of who are crippled or have young children born since the crash, as most of the able-bodied survivors had tried to make for civilization and died in the attempts. The hull of the 'Golden Tiger' was so badly shattered on landing that it is a miracle that anyone survived.

Although some emergency equipment and supplies survived, there is little else of value onboard as most items were either destroyed or damaged through long-term exposure to the atmosphere.

SCANIAN, Akivan <Geneered Human Variant>

See Contact: The Scania (Signal-GK fanzine issue 1)

Shakuur, Arnakhish (2010) C523565-8 Ni Po O:2208 { -2 } (B42-4) [3336] B - - 104 8 ImDv M1 V M2 V

Currently the Imperial Ministry of Justice is involved in a surveillance operation into 'organised crime' that appears to be using Shakuur as a financial clearing house. A number of independent financial institutions and branches of major banks are under investigation for money laundering.

Shuakhuar, Iiradu (2506) B5728BD-A He Ph Pi Pz { 2 } (A7B+5) [CA9E] BDe N A 600 12 ImDv M2 V

Adventure Hook - A common advertisement found on Shuakhuar: "Razorback Mercenaries – Want some combat experience? Join the biggest mercenary company on Shuakhuar. Excellent training and fair rates of pay guaranteed. (Most recruits earn enough in three tours with us to buy their own commission with a good company). Off-worlders welcome. Apply to recruitnow@razor.merc.shuak

In reality, the Razorbacks are recruiting for cannon fodder squads to act as decoys to draw the enemies fire whilst their professional troops attack elsewhere. Wages quoted are excellent but most of the salary is retained by the company until after each tour and is only paid to survivors.

Silk, Sapphyre (2440) C554377-9 Lo { -1 } (821-1) [3259] B S - 703 11 ImDv K9 V

See Port of Call: Silk (Signal-GK fanzine issue 7)

Taken from Legends and Lore: The First Ship

Legend has it that the Aakhri and Xiao arrived on Silk aboard a Slave transport that crashed, probably somewhere in the Thorn Barrier. While historians are agreed that this would appear to be the most likely solution to both the source of the colonisation, and the explanation for why so many different races were present amidst the Xiao, it does not explain why no trace of the ship has ever been discovered. Satellite scans of the planet have utterly failed to find any signs that a ship ever crashed. Lao of the Clan Lui Ch'en, have offered a reward of MCr. 5 for information leading to either the original remains or substantive evidence that could substantiate the legend.

There is an additional legend regarding the first ship that circulates amidst the Xiao: a legend that the Lao refuse to even acknowledge. It is claimed by some that it was not Captain Lui Chen that led the survivors to safety and established the Lao but a former slave, Fang Yi, who guided the crew and slaves to safety and who later ruled over the first colony. It is even claimed that the Lao of Lui Ch'en are not in fact descended from the offspring of the Captain and his Second Officer and concubine, Xhu Yilin, but from Fang Yi and Xhu! Were this ever to be substantiated, it would mean that the Lui Ch'en's claims to being descended directly from pure (and it is claimed, superior) Aakhri stock are absolute nonsense and would result in a great deal of lost face amidst the Council.

Adventure Hook - While none will admit it, it is believed that at least one of the Tai'pan Clans have offered a substantial reward to anyone able to collaborate the rumour.

The 100

The local population of Silk is divided into two separate and distinct classes; the Lao (Venerated One's) who rule and the Xiao (Guided One's) who are ruled over. The Lao are all- descended from either the original Aakhri crew (now known as the Lui Chien) who first 'colonised' Silk, or the four Tai'pan families that emigrated to Silk; the Han Wu, Jin Qi, Qui'ndao and Hualiu Si clans.

The 100; The Lao have a culture steeped in tradition. In addition to custom derived from their Aakhri/ Tai'pan heritage, several traditions have evolved that are unique to Silk. Perhaps the most important is that there must never be more than 100 adult Lao males on the planet at any one time. It is believed that this law evolved because of the shortage of females of appropriate caste.

When the Tai'pan first emigrated to Silk, the Aakhri did not realise that some of their males had a genetic tendency to breed only male offspring.

This coupled with Aakhri polygamous marriage practices and the falling birth-rate due to excessive inbreeding meant that there would never be enough females of high birth for an ever-expanding male population. The Clan Council had two choices, accept offspring born to lower caste females or restrict the number of male Lao. They chose the latter.

Under Clan law, a male becomes an adult at 16 when they are scarred with Clan markings to prove to the populace that they are indeed Lao. If there are already 100 Lao on the planet at this point the oldest (regardless of clan) is expected to either exile himself or commit suicide. However the would-be Lao has to prove their worth to the clan is greater than the person they would usurp.

To this end, the week before the youth's birthday is considered open season for assassination of the youth. If he is killed or flees the planet then he has proved he wasn't worthy. A system of surrogates has also evolved whereby members of the youth's clan may voluntarily commit suicide so that the youth's ascendancy will not be viewed as a threat by any member of the opposing clans. In the same way, should a youth survive a member of the same clan as the oldest Lao may volunteer to commit suicide and thereby preserve their clan elder. In this enlightened age most Clan elders pay the youth to go off-planet rather than stay and risk death by assassination.

Taken from Legends and Lore: Who killed the Lovers?

In 342, the Clan Hualui Si presented a youth, Ruan Enlai nahn Si, to the Council for ascendancy to the rank of Lao. The nearly 16 year-old youth was both handsome and a direct descendant of their Clan Elder. At this point he was introduced to his potential 'future' bride, - the beautiful and talented 14 years-old Jui Ghenhua nu Chen, of the Lui Ch'en.

Legend states they fell deeply in love at first glance. The problem lay in that it was Jui's great, great grandfather; the 231 year-old Clan Elder, Jiaxi nahn Lui Ch'en, who was due to be replaced by her 'future' husband. It is also now known that Jiaxi himself wished personally for the 'favours' of Jui.

As time approached for the period of Challenge, Ruan and Jui managed to conceive ways they could meet together. They became a common sight on the banks of the Wusoung Canal, walking in the dawn, arm-in-arm, utterly oblivious to everything except each other. All the Clans were horrified at what they saw as an open assault on tradition.

Then came the week of Challenge and Jiaxi hired off-world mercenaries as well as pledging the entire resources of his Clan to the task of destroying this 'obnoxious' youth. Despite every effort, even down to threatening to harm his love, Jui, Ruan was not to be found.

Finally, at dusk on the seventh day, the challenge completed, Ruan appeared. He had been hiding beneath the Palace of Lui Chen. He rushed passed the Lui Ch'en guards who, by tradition, were pledged not to harm him now that the period of Challenge was completed, to the Bunda Park to await the arrival of his beloved Jui.

As he waited, Ruan was shot 53 times with a needle beam laser-rifle. The beams sliced through his arms, legs, chest and finally genitalia.

The wounds intended to cripple, not kill. His assassin openly tortured him with each successive sweep; the beam cauterising the wounds preventing death through blood loss. Finally Ruan succumbed, dying almost half an hour after the first shot, from shock. His mangled corpse was discovered a few minutes later by Jui. Ruan had survived his week of Challenge and won the right to marry his beloved Jui, only to have it stolen from him by an assassin! Jui, in grief, threw herself into the Canal and drowned.

The Council was in uproar. Had Clan Lui Ch'en allowed an assassin to kill Ruan? Was it an off-worlder who failed to understand the time limit? All off-worlders were questioned, but this line of enquiry failed to turn up any clues as to the identity of the assassin.

The Council judged that Jiaxi still had to undergo ritual suicide because Ruan had survived the Challenge. The Lui Ch'en were outraged but had to agree to carry out the decision. Jiaxi's final words was a proclamation of his innocence. To this day no-one knows who killed Ruan.

Two days after the ritual suicide of Jiaxi nahn Lui Ch'en, a Xiao discovered the murder weapon and a gold coin near the site of Ruan's murder; a coin with the insignia of the Hualiu Si Clan. Had Ruan and Jui's behaviour upset members of Ruan's own Clan? Had this been some sort of ploy by the Lui Ch'en? Or was it, as many now believe an attempt by one of the other Clan's to discredit the Lui Ch'en and Hualui Si?

Ruan's diary revealed that Ruan and Jui had discussed, with their respective Clan Elders, going off-world immediately after the Challenge. A compromise which would have allowed Ruan to claim Jui as his bride while allowing Jiayi to continue to live.. Ruan and Jui had made no secret of these meetings and it is now believed that the reason behind Jiayi's intense hatred of Ruan was nothing more than jealousy. The mystery remains to this day; who really killed the lovers?

S'MRII

See Contact: S'mrii (SignalGK fanzine issue 5)

Taken from Legends and Lore: Doomsday A.I.

For centuries historians have been trying to discover how a race as unaggressive as the S'mrii could have succeeded in utterly butchering two full battalions of Vilani marines. In -5,288, an incident occurred involving the Vilani provincial governor and Phylum Kiaskui which resulted in the Laashuurarir (or Courtesy) war. Despite attempts to defend themselves the S'mrii were no match for the Vilani Grand Fleet. Several cities were destroyed by tactical nuclear weapons and an occupation force placed on Mimu. The whole war was over in less than three months.

In most places, there was very little physical resistance though; absolutely no co-operation was shown either.

Every opportunity was taken to hinder and sabotage the occupying forces and guerrilla warfare was commonplace. The occupying Governor, Shankir Daagkigadsu, decided to send in two battalions of marines to raze to the ground the rebel city of Chak*m Zaak. Expecting very little physical resistance, the commanders were surprised when radio contact was lost within minutes of the attack. Ten minutes later a single, extremely garbled message was received. The message, although badly broken, told of the Vilani troops "being slaughtered by the S'mrii". There was also a reference to the attackers being like "killer war machines..." Observers arriving at the scene discovered the Vilani troops hacked to pieces. None had survived. Each had literally been torn limb from limb. They also noticed that several S'mrii had apparently committed suicide and the few that survived were linked into their computer net in a comatose state. They finally managed to resuscitate one, only to discover that whatever had occurred had driven the individual completely mad.

Amidst his ravings he made frequent mention of "unleashing the floodwaters of Tr*issa" (the S'mrii concept of hell) and claimed the consequence was too great for him to bear. He was found twenty minutes later dead in his cell: he'd killed himself by biting through the veins of his own circulatory system and literally "bled" to death.

Additional troops were sent in but as they went from house to house they, discovered a similar sight in each; parents locked into the net in a disturbed mental state, often cradling their young, and the house in disarray.

No-one could or would explain what had happened to the Vilani troops. Any questioned intensively either attempted suicide or entered a deep comatose state from which they never recovered. An autopsy of the Vilani dead only proved that they'd died from wounds inflicted by a variety of weapons and tools. Forensics verified that the weapons had been wielded by S'mrii but with such savagery and force that defied description. What could have caused such a change in the S'mrii?

One possible clue was that all the S'mrii that; were "responsible" the attack were found linked into the net. Each was suffering from some degree of mental illness. Could the pacifist S'mrii have created some sort of Doomsday weapon? An Artificial Intelligence that had resided within the Net and somehow overridden the normal S'mrii responses and causing them to become utter savages? What is known is that the S'mrii had destroyed all records in the Net of the incident as well as deleting large segments of data. Particularly a large section of psychology data in the main S'mrii medical database known only as Skuaask'uiss: "Guardian".

Had an AI resided there until released to turn a peaceful race into blood-thirsty savages? Did the S'mrii, in a final act of atonement at the atrocities they'd committed while under its control, destroy it utterly? We will never know. This is one incident that no S'mrii will ever comment on. The whole subject is so taboo that it's possible we will never know what really happened that day.

Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag Sector By Ishmaga Ershuk

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The Guardian Response

Those who have met the S'mrii, from tourists to Imperial sophontologist, have been struck by the apparent contradiction that these peaceable creatures are directly descended from carnivorous predators.

In truth this simple fact of their genetic heritage is the single most important factor in the S'mrii psychology. In their "natural state", the S'mrii are at least as aggressive as Humaniti, and will fight to the death in defence of territory and family. However, it must be remembered that they suffered terribly as a result of the holocaust which was unleashed when their carnivore aggression, was given full rein. For the last fifteen thousand years, each S'mrii has been conditioned from birth to control these aggressive impulses by effort of will. With the development of the virtuality Dreams, to allow them to form self-confirming images of peaceful co-operation and vent their carnivore impulses in digital fantasies, this has been highly successful.

The wall between S'mrii societal conditioning and their genetic heritage is high, but it is not impenetrable. The S'mrii desire for fast and accurate combat is motivated by a deep-rooted psychological fear of what would occur if they were exposed to prolonged violence.

That fear is well-founded. Under extreme psychological pressure, S'mrii will crack. The failure of societal conditioning results in a transitory psychotic state called Skuaask'uiss, or Guardian Response. Very few outsiders have witnessed a S'mrii in Response and lived to tell of it. The change in an individual S'mrii Response is terrifying: a single-minded desire to kill everyone not identifiably of their own phylum. A S'mrii's intelligence is unaffected, and he will use any and every means at his disposal to annihilate his "enemies": tools, teeth and bare hands when ammunition is exhausted... Like some fast-acting drug, the changes when coming out of Response are as devastating as those while in it. Each S'mrii remembers exactly what he has done whilst in Response, and most cannot live with that memory. Those who do not kill themselves immediately seek solace in the Net, in the desperate hope that the Dreams will provide relief from the living nightmares of nuclear hellfire which such murderous acts awaken...

Soreal Incorporated

Hegan Kisniili, although officially retired to Daas, is still the active Chairperson of Soreal Inc. Soreal are a legitimate company and have clients throughout Iiradu subsector. However, unknown to those not part of the company's 'special division', Soreal has many more clients than the recipients of their services would like. The 'special division' are actually a band of corsairs operating under the cover of Soreal. Their base of operations is on the far side of Kurdeshu.

With its tainted atmosphere and Daas ownership, Kurdeshu provides an ideal base for the corsairs to operate from. They have several jump-capable raiders as well as a number of Soreal Q-ship merchants to act as decoys. This band operate throughout the subsector and have an extensive intelligence network in place thanks to its links to its parent company. As Soreal maintain the facilities of Kurdeshu, they are always looking to recruit new personnel from the dissidents sent there.

Kisniili is fully aware of the corsairs and has authorised token attacks on Soreal clients and its own shipping in order to remove any possible suspicion.

Ss'mitkr (ROM Constructs)

Taken from Legends and Lore: The Well of Souls

As early as -12,500 the S'mrii were believed to be making use of Ss'mitkr, (ROM constructs) in their decision making. A Ss'mitkr is a chip-based construct of a real person, living or dead. It is not an Artificial Intelligence but rather a very large set of response patterns connected to an extensive database and a controlling "expert" program. They have a personality (responses based on the Expert program's set selection criteria) and memories (database) which give the Ss'mitkr the illusion of life. As far as the construct is concerned, it is "alive", but they are also aware that they are a computer program; a conflict which can cause personality corruption for any Ss'mitkr that is left on-line or is attached to a large RAM (Random Access Memory) bank for any length of time. Each personality is built into ROM modules (Read-Only Memory.). This is because the process that imitates the original personality and associated skills can be corrupted by the permanent introduction of "outside" data. A ROM construct is only capable of learning while it is actively linked into the Net. When switched off it retains only its original programming and knowledge with no memory retention of its previous escapades. While it is possible to store information of previous "runs" for re-introduction to the construct once its on-line, such information cannot be accessed as "memories" or "experience" since the construct has no active memory of them. It's like reading someone else's autobiography, useful only as factual information. Rom constructs are also limited because, while they are built with an extensive library, they can only display a limited number of responses. For example asking a construct the same question several times will almost always result in the same replies and is thus extremely predictable.

Until 422, the earliest known constructs believed to be still in existence were designed in -5,432. Then an Archaeologist discovered the Triakssi manuscript.

The manuscript, in reality some ancient college records, told of the existence of a long-lost university construct collection which was moved to a storage facility at Zeessia'mr (Well of Souls) because of the Laashuurarir war. The location of the collection was lost until then, as the University City was destroyed during the war. Using the information in the manuscript scholars were able to pinpoint the location of the storage facility, which had been buried. Excavation began. Finally enough pyramid had been uncovered to allow access. The scientists went in only to discover the priceless construct collection had been stolen. The thieves, who had tunneled in less than twenty years before, had left everything behind except the databanks. Massive rewards were offered but the constructs never surfaced. The pyramid, now the Zeessia'mr museum, still contained the original computers and ROM recorders in pristine condition as well as records of which constructs had been stored there. Constructs of some of the greatest minds of their time, perhaps lost forever. None of the constructs have ever surfaced to this day. It is still not known how the thieves discovered the Well of Souls nor what had happened to the constructs. It's just another mystery.

Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag Sector By Ishmaga Ershuk

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Symmonds Tree <Caligoarbor Subtilis Symmondsi>

The Symmonds Tree is a plant transplanted by the Ancients from another system and subsequently geneered to act as a psionic receiving system. Tachyons received at an orbital station were turned into psions (sublight particles) and beamed to this "living antenna", where the signals were decoded. The project was interrupted by the Final War. Luckily, damage to Medurma during the Final War was relatively slight and the psionic plants survived

Background: Encephalo Six One

Encephalo Six One (or NC6-1) is the latest designer drug on the streets of Medurma. Unlike many of its rivals, it has not been created or produced by the Alikasch. This means no quality control, no dose limit compounds for safety or any inert chemical 'tags' to allow tracing of the manufacturer. Despite these drawbacks and the high prices charged for it Encephalo Six One has been benefiting from increased customer demand.

Meanwhile the Alikasch (who are known to take an extremely attitude to anyone adulterating or 'cutting' their products) have yet to decide on their reaction to this product in an already crowded market. What is certain is that in the few short months that NC6-1 has been available there have been several deaths among its users, some due to impurities, others due to accidents that occurred while under its effects and one or two as yet unexplained. This makes it extremely likely that the Alikasch will decide to take action against the dealers and producers. They are actively trying to find the names and bases of the group responsible but there is little information available on the streets.

The secret to the surprising success of Encephalo Six One is the inclusion of a bio-extract taken from the Symmonds Tree. This bio-extract acts as a psionic booster, which when combined with the more ordinary hallucinogenic compounds in the designer drug results in a 'trip' that is far more powerful than any rival compound.

For most users the only risks are the obvious ones of impurity and addiction connected with the use of NC6-1, however for a few unfortunate beings the psionic stimulants in the bio-extract creates the possibility of a far more dangerous side effect.

Whilst under its influence, those with high potential psionic strength have unconsciously managed to project images and emotions over a distance of several hundred metres which can affect anyone nearby with traces of psionic ability.

One example of this phenomenon is the case of security guard Jalcom Ward, who was on night patrol of an exclusive up apartment complex when he experienced the translucent figure of a young lady drifting towards him. Overcome with an unnatural fear, he ran through a glass door and fell down two flights of stairs, breaking eleven bones in an attempt to escape.

On later examination of security recordings, no trace of Ward's 'ghost lady' was found. Jalcom Ward is currently involved in a legal action against his employers; over medical costs and loss of disability allowance given they believe he was unfit to work at the time of the incident.

Encephalo Six One has yet to be used by a trained psionic – when that happens they will either realise the truth that this contains a unique psionic enhancement drug – or thousands will experience the largest mass hallucination in Medurma's history.

Adventure Hook - This can be approached from several directions, the party could be Alikasch or Police investigating the new drug and its source or hired by the insurance company (or Ward's family) to investigate several similar claims to Jalcom Ward's.

Talking Temples of Uaam, The

The Jala'Lak legend of the God-Creatures are in fact tales about Shassahrhi (Malaach) slaver ships that used telepath spheres buried beneath the temples to call the Jala'Lak to the temples in preparation for collection. The reason that the recorded message is no longer heard is that the siren-like telepath spheres have completely powered down.

Tarterus, Shallows (0514) B000431-E As Ni Va { 1 } (734-3) [151A] B N - 101 15 ImDv A2 V K3 V

There is indeed an abandoned 'Timer' facility 'buried' within the closed sections of the asteroid starport. There are two dozen individuals in cold berths who have been forgotten. The cold berths are powered by a small integral fusion plant that sufficient fuel to last for at least another two centuries.

Thal- Tlei Entertainers

The term Thal-Tlei Entertainer is used to describe anyone who has undergone cybernetic alteration of their face, and body to enable them to change their appearance apparently at will. The method was first used by Doctors Thalim and Tleilaz in 1005 at Upag (0111) and, to date it is believed that up to 200 people within the Imperium may have undergone the treatment.

The surgery required is quite extensive and utterly irreversible. Dermaplast is injected into the muscles of the face and hand and then an artificial elasticated cartilage is used to replace certain parts of the facial bones, including the nose and ears. These 'bones' are filled with Neyfakh (a malleable silicon of a putty-like consistency). The bone structure could be altered by exposing the Neyfakh to certain artificial compounds which softens the material allowing it to be moulded. The dermaplast also becomes malleable and is capable of being shaped using a full face mould or through manipulating the dermaplast by hand. The hair is replaced with fine fibre-optic tubes made to resemble natural hair. A thin layer of heatmat implanted beneath the scalp allows the fibre-optics to alter the temperature and thus undergo a change of colour. The hair length relies on thousands of small spools glued to the skull lengthening or shortening the hair. Eye colour is changed by permanently inserted chameleon lens covering the iris. Expandable sacs inserted just beneath the surface of the skin around the body, eyes and cheeks create the illusion of fat. When inflated they cause an apparent increase in weight though obviously the weight never actually changes. Skin colour is achieved by small artificial glands inserted beneath the skin containing a variety of dyes which are distributed through the blood directly to the surface of the skin.

Voice is altered by a miniature voice-box inserted into the throat. A complete duplication of another person could take several hours to achieve but Thal-Tlei boast that they can alter their appearance so they are no longer recognisable in less than 3 minutes.

Perhaps the best known Thal-Tlei is the Tri-Vee star, Thomml Bullen, who uses face moulds to redesign his face into caricatures of the rich and famous in a matter of minutes (though time-lapse photography is used in the studio to give the effect that the transformation is instantaneous)

All Thal-Tlei, by law, must have Identichips inserted at the time of operation to ensure that they do not use their unique skills to get involved in criminal activity. Most travel in troupes and are believed by many to be amongst the best entertainment known in the Imperium.

What is generally unknown is that if the price is right, the procedure can be purchased on the black-market in Port Inferno, Nukaush.

Twin Lines Shipping LIC.

The reason the Imperial Navy never caught on to the Twin Line merchant fleet's coming and going's is the fact that each ship is secretly equipped with a black globe. The technology was "bought" from Medurman naval forces and duplicated on Akiva.

There were originally ten ships so equipped, serviced by a single Medurman engineer. When he died the Scanians kept the devices as well maintained as possible but currently only three are in full working order with another two working occasionally.

Urdu, Khandi (2216) D3106A9-8 Na Ni { -3 } (A51-2) [7369] B S - 602 10 ImDv K0 V M4 V M6 V

Adventure Hook: The oligarchy currently in exile on Khandi, is recruiting mercenaries to attempt a second (and given their dwindling resources also likely to be their last) attempt at restoring their regime. Their senior member, the Baron of Urdu, is hurrying them along since the Duke of Khandi, Duke Anyu Ishaira, considers that it was the Baron's maladministration that caused the rebellion, plans to petition the Emperor to revoke the Baron's patent of nobility on the grounds of incompetence.

Undim, Ushra (0914) C000343-A As Lo Va Di(Shassahrhi) { 0 } (A21-3) [1327] B - - 514 14 ImDv K7 V M4 V

The comet that caused the near extinction that resulted in the Shassahrhi (Malaach) evolving is still "out there" somewhere in the Undim system and the violent mutagen it continues to carry poses a terrible risk to the current-day inhabitants.

URPAYANS - Urpa, Iiradu (2505) B776555-B Ag Ni (Urpayans) { 2 } (A46+1) [3739] BC - - 803 14 ImDv K4 V

Urpa was settled during the Rule of Man by the same genetic engineering company that was responsible for creating the Scanians. Unlike on Akiva, Urpa was not a secret base and the first Urpayans were created as sterile androids. Before the Company pulled out a decision was made locally to make the final batch (who would be staying behind as caretakers) fertile.

No-one expected that the Company would never return. Although the base was not covert, the only knowledge regarding the origin of the race exists in an ancient archive computer drive on Terra and deep within the Urpayan's most sacred temple (the Cathedral of Foundation) where the remains of an ancient genetics lab is located below the altar. Scanians would be able to identify the layout and equipment design as being extremely similar to the creation site on Akiva.

USHRA, Ushra (1016) A625943-F Hi In Cp Asla0 S'mr0 Ziad0 { 4 } (H8G+1) [6D2C] BEF N - 933 11 ImDv M2 V

See Port of Call: Ushra (Signal-GK fanzine issue 3)

ZIADD <Homo Sapiens Neanderthalensis Ziadd> (Minor Human Race)

See Contact: Ziadd (Signal-GK issue 9)

All Ziadd have one natural psionic ability: they naturally maintain a psionic shield that prevents their minds from being read. It is best described as a constant stream of nonsense thoughts or background static that covers their more focused thoughts rendering them unreadable. All Ziadd produce it though very few are aware that they do so.

Other psionic talents are rare amongst the Ziadd. Little research has been done into Ziadd psionics (or to be more precise the lack of them). Their lack of ability seems to stem from genetic modification performed by the Ancients. Some radical groups have used this 'evidence' for their continuing anti-psionic propaganda, pointing out the Ancients were unlikely to have removed useful traits.

The mystery of the unusual changes to Ziadd hands and feet has remained unresolved. The mutation is similar to the medical condition, Ectrodactyly - a genetic defect of the 7th chromosome previously only found in the Vadoma people of Western Zimbabwe. It was assumed initially that the arrangement had been created to give the race a substantially better gripping force at the expense of manual dexterity. Such digit arrangements are typically seen in creatures that hang under branches (like sloths), however the Ziadd are not particularly known for their climbing abilities, and in truth their hands do not give them any particular advantage.

In reality, it was the result of a genetic mishap; "proof" that not all Ancients modifications were positive or intentional. Should this become common knowledge it is believed it might have psychological repercussions on the Ziadd if psyche should it become known that they were an "unsuccessful" experiment...

Ziadd Corsairs - See also: Chaiklin Khu'ch <Klatha'sh for 'children (of the) stars'>

In 872 Zeda suffered a tragedy when an explosion in the Senatorial Palace killed the Lord High Senator and many members of the Government. The cause of the explosion has never been revealed, but it left Zeda without a functioning planetary government. To prevent the total collapse of the central government each city elected new representatives to the Senate. The leadership of many of the cities disagreed about the Senatorial choices of who should be these chosen, and many of those chosen refused to work together. Accusations flew, and the situation threatened to escalate into a full blown civil war. In 874 the Sector Duke ordered Imperial troops to Zeda to act as a peacekeeping force. As a compromise the Scout Service stepped in, temporarily replacing the upper echelons of the government with their own staff until new elections could be held.

Although a Senate was duly elected, the IISS retained an executive veto power on any decision; thankfully it never had call to use it. The Scout Service mediated over discussions between each of the factions, and by the 900s compromises acceptable to most sides in the dispute had apparently been agreed. However a number of clans disagreed with the Scout Service's involvement and manipulations and began to plot in secret. They decided that the only way out of their predicament was to attempt an armed coup. They gained the support of various off-world groups, mainly from among the Ziadd colonies within Zeda and Shallows subsectors who secretly began to arm their merchant fleets in preparation for war.

More through bad luck than anything the plot was uncovered and the central government started rounding up the leaders. By 904 the tension finally sparked into conflict. The Clan homelands declared for their fallen leaders and across Zeda there were armed uprisings.

The rebels on Zeda were ill prepared for a fight, lacking weapons and heavy equipment, but they were fortunate in that the military were as ill-prepared as them. On the whole the armed forces remained loyal to the government, although a few units changed sides. By 905 the uprisings had been contained and by 907 the last few pockets of resistance had apparently been eliminated.

A few clan leaders managed to escape before the loyalist retributions and found safe havens either on the planets that had supported them or amongst the armed fleets that their allies had prepared. Their close associates began to find life progressively more difficult on Zeda and soon followed the example of their peers.

In the wave of inter-clan hostility and violence that followed the collapse of the uprising clan members felt increasingly isolated. The majority fled off-world to join their compatriots. What started as a trickle of individuals seeking asylum became a confused and anarchic flood, with millions moving off-world between 910 and 1000 to escape persecution.

Many of the clans that fled and several of the planets that supported the rebels, with their fleets of clandestinely armed ships decided that Zeda was a lost cause and decided to turn instead to piracy and unofficial privateering to replace their lost fortunes. Within a century a culture that supported the pirate attacks on non-affiliated shipping had developed in Shallows and Zeda. Planets such as Ziamr provided the Ziadd Corsairs with covering up their attacks in return for a share of the booty.

Most people today believe that piracy only exists in the frontier Sectors of the Imperium. As most ships seized by the Corsairs are either destroyed or captured outright and the people onboard are either enslaved or killed, the loss of shipping in Dagudashaag is generally attributed to accidents or poor maintenance—excuses that the Corsair-supporting planetary Governments are happy to substantiate when required.

Ziamr, Shallows (0719) C310888-A Na Ph Pi Ziad8 { 1 } (A7A+1) [895A] BDe - - 900 11 ImDv K2 V

Taken from the INDISS news reports: Crew Rescued

Earlier today the seven surviving crew of the Subsidised Merchant "Paradise of Nandini" were released from prison and taken under Imperial escort to the la'nrnruk SIA ship "Ktia'Kjel". The whole affair began last year when the "Paradise of Nandini" limped into Ziamr-downport claiming to have been attacked and boarded by Ziadd pirates. The eight surviving crew members were immediately arrested by the local Ziadd government who claimed that the whole story was a fraud to cover up for a mutiny. The crew were kept in horrifying conditions and, despite serious wounds, without any medical attention. They were apparently told that they would remain imprisoned until each and every one of them had signed a confession stating that the whole incident was an insurance fraud. While five of the crew eventually signed the confession, under duress, two members of the crew refused to sign.

The situation remained undiscovered until last month when a visitor to Ziarnr accidentally learnt of the crew's predicament and informed the Imperial Navy immediately she was off-world. Initially the Ziamr Government refused to acknowledge the existence of the prisoners, though INDISS has since learnt that they were moved no less than twelve times during this period. Eventually, after the Imperial Navy threatened to carry out sanctions, the local Government agreed to release the surviving crew - Tes Kirsch having died two months before from untreated wounds.

Last night the local government issued a statement that the whole affair had been blown completely out of proportion. Since pirates no longer existed within any part of Dagudashaag, the government had been faced with the task of bringing the true perpetrators to justice and preventing the spread of such malicious and blatant, racially motivated lies.

They refused to comment on the report issued by the Imperial Navy that over the last ten years there had been over 120 known attacks on small shipping within Shallows and Zeda subsectors primarily by Ziadd marauders and that examination of the "Paradise of Nandini" revealed severe fire damage consistent with the crew's story. Commander Brett Mane said later that it was time that local Ziadd-led authorities stopped trying to pretend that Ziadd marauders did not exist and worked with the Navy to put a stop to it once and for all.

While the surviving crew members have yet to issue a statement, a representative from Sk*akia, & Kkaskuama did confirm that they will be acting on behalf of the families and crew in this matter.

Adventure Hook: Sk*akia, & Kkaskuama will employ investigators to positively confirm the existence of Ziadd marauders in the Ziamr system as well as for evidence showing collaboration between the system Government and the pirates.

Ziruushda, Old Suns (1204) A977377-A Lo Da Hama8 Aqua1 { 1 } (521+1) [345A] B - A 400 10 ImDv M1 V

See Port of Call: Ziruushda (Signal-GK issue 4)

Uncontacted: MALAACH

Overview: The Malaach (or Shassahrhi, as they referred to themselves) are an extinct race native to Hhrassahr (Undim/Ushra). They were exterminated at the hands of the Ancients, around approximately –350,000 because of their savage and warlike manner.

They were descended from carnivore/killer stock which, independently, achieved a Tech 18 society prior to their extinction. Their artefacts and ruins, found throughout Ushra and in parts of Pact, Old Suns, Khandi and Mimu are currently believed to be the work of the Ancients.

The term “Malaach” is a Scanian word meaning “Messengers from Beyond” and was, generally applied to all extinct races that had achieved a technologically based society. In 1115 Professor Ishmaga Ershuk, author of “Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag Sector”, used the term to refer to a specific race which he claimed originated in Dagudashaag and was responsible for all the Ancient artefacts found in the Sector. It is his theory that the Ancients were not a single race, but an amalgamation of several races, which had achieved a similar high technology level at about the same time. This, he claimed, accounted for the variety of sites. He further claimed that it was the Malaach that transported humans and Droyne to Dagudashaag.

His theory, while well received by the general public, was later discredited by the Academic population.

Description:

The Malaach stood up to 1.5m high and varied in length (depending on sex and age) between 2m and 6m. They had an outward appearance similar to a hybrid Scorpion/ Noxian Spider except they had sixteen limbs in total.

Limbs: Manipulation: The Malaach used six, multiple-jointed limbs, each ending in a single bony “hook” for manipulation. These limbs were clustered together in two groups of three, located either side of the chest cavity. When not in use these limbs folded up into two shielded sacs on the chest. Each cluster was capable of working independently or together to act as “hands”. Fine hairs on the base of the bony “hooks” gave additional grip.

Locomotion: They had a further eight limbs which were used as legs. These were angled upwards like a terran spider and were aligned symmetrically along the abdomen region. Each leg was segmented. A delicate coxa attached the limb to the abdomen. This was protected by an armoured trochanter. To this was attached a powerful femur and a long, slim ‘tibia’ made of four distinct parts. The leg ended in a large pad. The front pair of legs were used as weapons and ended in two large, curved claws which also gave traction in icy environments. The middle two sets of limbs were primarily for locomotion and each limb ended in multiple small claws and fine hair.

The rear pair of limbs was extremely powerful, and enabled a Malaach to spring on to its victim from some distance away. In the low gravity environment of Hhrassahr, Malaach could achieve leaps of up to 12m in distance and up to 3m in height.

Pincers: Each Malaach had a powerful pair of frontal pincers which were located beside the chest sacs. These pincers allowed the Malaach to grab and hold its prey. They were extremely well armoured. Tail: The Malaach also had a segmented armoured tail, which ended in a poisoned stinger. This stinger carried a powerful acid which it could inject into its victims. Females carried their tails above their heads, in a similar manner to Terran scorpions; while the male carried theirs curled beneath their abdomen.

Sensory Apparatus:

Movement: Hairs attached to the legs at the tibia were connected to vibratory sense organs deep within the abdomen. These allowed the Malaach to sense movement resulting from air current disruption.

Scent: Unlike true arachnids, the Malaach had a pair of sensory antennae mounted on their foreheads, which allowed them to “taste” for air-borne scents.

Sight: Also mounted on the forehead were two transparent membranes which protected three pairs of eyes clustered together. Each eye was capable of independent function, and as a result, a Malaach could keep track of several objects at the same time. The lower pair of eyes supplied bifocal vision, the middle pair give long distance while the upper set sensed deep into the infra-red spectrum.

Hearing: The Malaach were completely deaf beyond their ability to sense movement caused by sound. This may have been one of the chief factors that led to the development of their empathic/telepathic method of communication.

Physical Structure:

External: The Malaach primarily had a structure consisting of head, main body and abdomen. This was covered in strong natural armour formed from bonded hair. Much of the external structure differed, both from sex to sex and in the latter centuries of their existence, from Nest to Nest.

Internal: Unlike arthropods, the Malaach had an internal skeletal structure. The external shell was formed primarily as defence. They had a honeycombed bone structure, which formed round the internal organs, shielding and cushioning them. The body was filled with foam-like phlegm which prevented internal damage of the organs caused by blows. Their size dictated near mammalian organs, including a circulatory system and twin hearts, bellow-like lungs, a sensitive nervous system and two brains. The hind brain, located at the base of the abdomen, controlled movement, the stinger and all involuntary responses. While capable of functioning independently on a purely instinctive level, it was normally controlled by the fore brain located in the head. This controlled the deliberate responses of the hind brain, the senses, the manipulatory organs and the pincers. It should be noted that the male fore brain was up to four times larger, and much more developed than the females. Of the four sexes only the Males and Breeders developed true intelligence. The females had an empathically linked hive mind instead.

The rest of the anatomical detail varied according to sex: see below

Reproduction:

The Malaach had four sexes.

Females: Females, including Queens, can reproduce asexually by laying eggs, which can only hatch into other females. Females lacked the womb needed to reproduce sexually. They were the racial warriors and grew to about 3m in length from antennae to stinger. The shell consisted of natural armour plating covered in small spines. This armour showed a great deal of variation, not just between Nests, but between individuals born of the same batch. The eye clusters were protected by a bristly eye turret mounted at the top of the head, just in front of the antennae. They had elongated faces, ending in small mandibles which contained a poison sac. To the rear of the abdomen they had a small egg sac. Unless controlled, they could lay up to 100 eggs each weighing about 1kg, in a year. Females were non-intelligent though highly instinctive and would always act to preserve the sanctity of the Nest. They shared an empathic hive mind with the Queen, which almost bordered on the telepathic ability of the Males. Females lived for up to a hundred years though due to the races warlike nature, few survived to old age.

Female eggs hatched after a 48 (standard) day incubation period (though it was possible for them to stay in a form of suspension for up to several years before hatching) and spent the first 3 years as two limbed larvae. The adults left the mindless larvae alone mid seemed to have had no parental instincts towards them. They survived outside the Nest living on the cast-outs. They were extremely carnivorous and were even known to attack and eat injured Males. After 3 years and up to 20 moults later, they swarmed back to the Nest. There they underwent chrysalis for a period of another year. During this time the larvae were converted into the Female form and burst forth. Generally newly metamorphosed Females were totally feral until the Queen made empathic contact with each one and "impressed" it into her service. As soon as they left the chrysalis they were capable of producing eggs themselves and frequently did so.

Queens: Queens were the result of live births from another Queens' womb. The embryo as a result of witnessing a psychic birthing trauma [PBT] while developing inherited certain active hormones which resulted in the Female Nymph metamorphosing into a Queen during the pupae stage. Only one Queen could exist in a Nest at any one time, though several "Princesses" and "Nymphs" could exist sheltered and protected by the Queen. Queens grew to about 5m long and had a womb below and to the rear of their egg sac. Only sexually active Nymphs (Princesses) were immune to the desire to protect the Queen and were shielded against the Queen's powerful empathic transmission, which she used to control the Female warriors. Indeed, they themselves would try and impress newly developed Females to their cause.

Queens were fertilised by both mates and the Breeder. Males produced fertilised eggs in the Queen's egg sac while Breeders produced Male (generally twin) offspring in the Queen's womb. Psychic echoes caused by PBT release resulted in the involuntary release of certain active hormones into the womb which altered the embryos. In the case of twins the PBT frequently resulted in the death of the weaker embryo. The altered embryo changed sex to Female but, instead of being born as larvae, they remained in the womb for a period of 360 days. The Queen then gave birth to a miniature Female Malaach known as a nymph. For the first 10 days, the Nymph was extremely vulnerable as the plate armour hardened. The Breeder, in an attempt to preserve the status quo would try to kill off all but one Nymph.

The Queen however, would attempt to protect them by keeping them close to her at all times. At 3 years the Nymph entered a chrysalis stage during which time it would shed its stinger, its main defence against the Breeder, as well as its armour. It grew in size and developed a womb. When it left the chrysalis state the "Princess" was capable of using its empathic ability to try and prevent it being killed. Within a year it would become sexually active and would attempt to steal the Breeder. At this point it would enter into a death duel with the existing Queen. If it won, it would kill all its sisters and eat their corpses. Queens were capable of breeding for 36 years and, like all females could, survive for up to 100 years. Most Queens, if not all, were killed by stronger, younger offspring.

All Queens were capable of carrying a live offspring and laying eggs fertilised by the ordinary males at the same time.

PBT: The Queen's empathic emissions caused psychic overload in certain species. The psychic feedback from this overload caused the "male" embryo to alter sex through the Queens' involuntary release of hormones into the womb. This overload (PBT) was always terminal for the other species used.

Males: All males were capable of fertilising a Queen but only the Breeder could produce live offspring which metamorphosed into other Queens and Breeders. Males were generally about 4m long, had relatively light armour and had a much smaller, though much more flexible, tail which it normally kept curled up. Males were born from fertilised eggs after a 230 day gestation period. A Queen generally laid a batch of about 10 each time and it is believed that they could lay up to 1,000 a year. Each hatchling emerged as a miniature male, fully functional, and with their intelligence already awakened by mature males in the Nest. Young males were protected deep within the Nest and intensively educated.

They took part in their first Funeral feast (known as the Ceremony of Knowledge) at about 2 years old when they were fed ancestral RNA. The RNA disseminated throughout the Malaach body at death, penetrating into the muscle tissue. Eating the meat of Malaach males meant consuming small quantities of RNA. This resulted in the young males suffering a fevered period, of up to 5 days while they assimilated the inherited knowledge. Thereafter the male was capable of assimilating information, through RNA transfer, within hours. A small percentage of males proved incapable of partaking of RNA transfers and were killed in the hope of breeding this regressive trait out of the Nest. Those who survived this period were classed as Hsarh or "Minor Intellectuals". Over the next 4 years the Hsarh grew physically and intellectually as they assimilated more and more RNA transfers. At age six they were classified and established into a Hhairh or "Guild", where they stayed and interfaced until they died. At death they joined the ancestral RNA.

Males were the only intelligent aspect of the race and communicated by a type of telepathy which allowed them to "tight beam" their ability. They could choose to "speak" to either individuals or entire populations. They generally survived for up to 300 years as they led a pampered life protected by the females. They used their psychic abilities to relay simple messages to the females.

Breeders: Breeders were live offspring created by the interaction of a Queen and an adult Breeder. Each Breeder was born as a live offspring, in the Queen's womb and had a normal gestation Period of 250 days. Breeders were born as miniature males. Like the normal Male offspring. At about 2 years old, when they underwent the Ceremony of Knowledge, they entered a chrysalis period which lasted for about a year. When they emerged they had lost their stinger and armour and had instead formed a thin skin.

Their sexual organ had also changed. On the tip of the penis small downward facing barbs appeared. These barbs, during penetration, caused the Queen to involuntarily retract the opening to the egg sac and allowed direct fertilisation of the womb. These offspring were always male unless the Queen partook of PBT during the first 200 days of pregnancy. Breeders were protected until they were about 8 years old, at which time the oldest Breeder offspring fought the current Breeder in a duel to the death. This was to ensure that the strongest survived to pass on its genes to the Nest.

Background:

Prehistory: The proto-Malaach began its existence as a small hunter-carnivore on Hhrassahr about -1,000,000.

Its most dangerous enemy was other Nests of proto-Malaach. It was the threat from its own cannibalistic species that started the evolutionary defence race. It was unlikely that the race would have ever developed intelligence were it not for a single specific incident, the Hasharli Comet. In -750,000 the comet's tail entered the Hhrassahr atmosphere, a violently active retrovirus, carried deep-frozen in the comet's nucleus until, warmed by close passage by the system's primary star, it filtered down into the world's atmosphere from the comet's tail.

Many species died out. Several sub-races of proto-Malaach also went down the road to extinction. One species, the Shassahrhi, survived though the radiation altered the race. Over the next 500 years the bad and infertile adaptations died out. The Malaach increased in size and grew powerful armour to protect it against radiation. The most unusual adaptation was the creation of Queens and Breeders. A single Malaach female line developed a womb as well as its egg sac. It remained a useless adaptation until a female bred with a Male born with altered genitalia. The pain of intercourse caused her to close the mouth of the egg sac and allowed sperm to reach her womb. The offspring of this was the first Queen. She was capable of emitting an empathic projection that caused the entire Nest to try and protect her. She initially bred only males which were in her partner's genetic image - the first Breeders.

PBT was discovered purely by accident. A Hrhas (a type of large grub) was killed in the Queen's presence. This resulted in an empathic fit of pure ecstasy for the Queen. She responded by releasing an echo which was extremely addictive to the whole Nest. This Psychic Birthing Trauma resulted in further Queens. The Nest soon brought more and more Hrhas to the Queen so they could feed their empathic addiction. When the male parent died and was consumed, the males in the Nest discovered themselves suffering a fever. The females were unaffected. On awakening, these males discovered that they now "remembered" the experiences of the dead male. Several Malaachs went mad and killed themselves but enough survived to carry on the assimilation gene. Each of these Malaach was able to pass on their RNA skills and memories to future generations through their corpses. The first true Malaach Nest was established. One side effect was the loss by the normal Malaach female to lay fertilised eggs.

By -600,000 the only Shassahrhi left were what we would call the Malaach. The constant assimilation of parental RNA had led to true intelligence. This intelligence was increased by the ability to eat the memories and skills of dead Malaach. The race remained aggressive and the planet was in a constant state of war. It was this need for offensive advantages over its kin that led to the invention of technology. Each Nest remained independent but the knowledge they discovered could be passed on merely by the capture and assimilation of any male inhabitant.

Through the Ceremony of Knowledge their children would instinctively learn all the knowledge of the previous generation.

The second racial crisis took place in -500,000 when the Malaach, who had no idea of conservation, killed off the last Hrhas. Other species were tested in order to provide PBT, but none proved successful. In the end the race was reduced to using Malaach males under torture to provide the PBT. However, this was not a very successful solution. Males were able to screen themselves so only willing volunteers could be used. They had to be young and often several were required to create sufficient PBT. To make things worse, the Queen frequently aborted.

Another solution was needed and fast. In an unprecedented move Nest Hsrha hosted a peace conference between all the major Nests. After the initial distrust was overcome, all Nests present agreed to temporarily work together to find a solution. Nest Rhhari were experts in genetic adaptation and they explored that angle, resulting in several variant species in the passing. Nest Hsarh were experts in rocket technology and Nest Hsrha in chemical warfare. Between them they developed a viable rocket, which was capable of reaching orbit. Examination of meteorites proved that life almost certainly existed on other planets.

During the next two hundred years technology advanced rapidly from chemical rockets to cryogenics and generation ships. The first generation ship was dispatched to Tethys. Each ship was, by necessity, a full Nest as no male was willing to depart without a Queen.

It was this inability to colonise without viable Queens that was the main brake on the Malaach's ability to colonise the whole Sector.

During this period, although many of the guilds cooperated with each other, the Nests still warred. At least one Nest was destroyed by nuclear weapons before the guilds banned that form of warfare.

Within fifty years of the first generation ships being dispatched. Nest Rshi chanced upon the principle of the Jump drive. The first ship found itself in Deep space (at 1015). Additional jumpships quickly allowed the Malaach to establish a deep-space Nest capable of refuelling ships. This totally self-sufficient Nest was handled by the Hrashr, a minor, relatively unaggressive Nest. Ships were sent to Laruu, Tethys and Nox. On Tethys they discovered the proto-Hamaran. Samples were immediately tested by the shipboard Queen. This proved that the Hamaran were capable of supplying the needed PBT. The crisis was averted.

Later, when the generation ships finally arrived, they found that the planets were already colonised by Malaach. Within a hundred years Jump 2 ships were establishing Nests on most planets within the subsector.

Most Nests, aware of the risks of keeping their entire clan in a single Nest, or even planet, started sending their Princesses out with a segment of the clan to create affiliated Nests on other planets. Some stayed close to the parent Nest. Others immediately set themselves up as independents. One lesson the Malaach had learnt was not to trust a single gene pool for their much needed PBT. They sent out scout ships – small Nests - to try and discover other sources. At least one ship reached Mimu and brought S'mrii to Ambrym/Pact. For the most part, the Nests were established in the Ushra and Old Sun's subsectors.

The Malaach developed functional teleport devices. They Used this both as means of transportation (of non-living material - the Stepping Disks killed live material in transit) and as a weapon. Stepping disks were generally set up several metres underground to create portals above ground. Anyone stepping through such a portal was instantly killed and their corpse transported to the Larder where their RNA could be extracted.

Artificial replication of RNA meant that the knowledge of a single individual could be passed on to an entire Nest. Banks of RNA were established in case of a racial disaster.

They hadn't yet solved the problem of organic transportation when the Ancients entered their sphere of existence. This was the first truly advanced race the Malaach had discovered. Their initial reaction was to sample them for their PBT potential. Unfortunately they proved highly acceptable. The initial expedition was led by one of the Ancient's Grandchildren. The Ancients immediately declared war and, in a period of less than seven years had completely obliterated the planet of Hhrassahr (Undim/Ushra).

The final solution, after destroying Hhrassahr and several other major settlements, was to create a virus that corroded the Queens' womb. The Malaach were dead as a race yet Nests kept on fighting to the end. Several Nests were never discovered due to the racial tendency towards secrecy and defence. It didn't matter; the virus still reached them and killed them off. The Ancients then set up base in several of the Malaach Nests, stripping them of whatever was useful.

Homeworld:

The Malaach home world, Hhrassahr, was in close orbit (0.2 AU) around the primary star now known as Undim, a K7 V. The star has a mass of 0.54 and a luminosity of 0.5 with only three orbits occupied. Undim has a small M4 V companion in orbit 5 which had two gas giants in orbit around it.

Hhrassahr itself was a small world, 4,411 km in diameter with a thin oxygen-nitrogen atmosphere. The gravity was 0.3g with a hydrography of 32.5% and a surface temperature of 103°C. Beyond, was the small gas giant now known as Pela with what was then three satellites. The Malaach colonised all of them but only on Shsr was a full Nest established. The Ancients vaporised this moon so that the ring, now known as Amber, in orbit around Pela is all that's left. Beyond that was the gas giant now known as Tafri with its eight moons. In orbit five was Taya, the dwarf companion, with its two small gas giants.

Hhrassahr was an extremely fertile world until the Malaach stripped it bare. It orbited Undim every 44.56 standard days and completed a rotation every 30.15 hours.

Government/Culture:

Hhrassahr was a balkanised world. Each Nest provided for itself and was in a constant state of war with every other Nest. Only the Grand Guild of Union, which coordinated the racial survival of the Malaach during the Hrhas crisis and once more during the Final war, could be considered to have been a world government.

Most Nests were governed by a representative of each guild within the Nest. Since each science and academic pursuit was represented by their own guild, this council was made up of 500 representatives. The Breeder was also present, but only had priority in matters relating to the welfare of the Queen. Only males were represented of course.

This council was slow to act, so, in matters military, total control was handed over to the Guild of Honour, usually represented by the oldest Breeder Prince. In practice, each guild made decisions for themselves and only came to the Nest Council when a matter was too large for a single guild to decide or where the future of the Nest was concerned.

Each Malaach male had the chance to rise to the top of their guild. At six years old each male was tested and assigned to the Hhairh or Guild that they were best suited to; although technically a male could refuse, to do so meant utter exile, a fate beyond comprehension to the gregarious Malaach. Upon entering a Hhairh each male was assigned a teacher. This teacher had total control over them, even down to the matter of life and death. A Malaach could only “graduate” once they proved their superiority over their teachers; whether by intellect or assassination. The outcome was the same. Each male amassed prestige by the number of “students” they had under them. Once a male won free he was able to subdue students of his own. Only by having, and successfully subduing more students than the current Guild leader (or by assassination as before) could a male rise to the top. Only the Breeder was exempt from this. His duty was the preservation of the Nest, through creating more Queens and Breeder Princes.

Each Nest was designed differently but most followed a similar pattern. They were generally built underground. Most consisted of many low tunnels, interconnecting with the female nursery areas. Deep below in perpetual darkness was the Queen’s dome. This was a large cavern at the heart of the Nest site where the Queen resided throughout her life. Her eggs were raised in the chambers both side and, in the level above, were the male Guild chambers. On the surface was the agricultural fields tended by the females, with male overseers, and the industrial zones, which, by tradition were established a distance away from the main Nests. In the later part of their history, just as some Nests bred special variations into their race so some Nests became individualised in design. The high, termite-like mountain, known as Joker’s Tower on Nox was one such, as is the now collapsed spiral caverns on Folly. Each Nest had its own starport and system defences. After the final war, most bases were simply collapsed by implosion. Only the special construction of the Joker’s tower resulted in it being left standing as a silent memorial to a race now utterly forgotten.

Communication: The Malaach were utterly deaf beyond the ability to sense movement caused by sound. The mates were able to communicate between themselves by telepathy. The females were near mindless creatures that were connected by the ability to feel projected emotions. Each female, when it came of age, was “impressed” by the Queen. This was not a conscious ability, but merely the need to feel secure. The Queen radiated raw emotional energy which the female desired. In order to maintain this link it would do anything. This was the basis of the female hive mind. The females protected the Queen (and through her, the males). While the Queen made sure they also participated in her emotive feasts. The males did develop a written language though it was rarely used. Knowledge was passed on, from generation to generation, by RNA transfer. New concepts could be expounded by telepathy. The written word was used mostly for ceremonial or memorial purposes.

The Malaach Today: The Malaach established Nests throughout many subsectors but only a few have been discovered. The Malaach Nest/Ancient bases on Besayes and Ambrym in the Medurma system (which was discovered by Dr Rothery), the Joker’s Tower on Nox (1115), a Nest on Ushra (1016) which is currently under investigation by the Navy, a Nest on Kaurga (1118) which is being investigated by KaurCorp, and the spiral caverns on Folly (1713). Few believe that these Nests were created by a single race.

Still undiscovered are the nest on Uurku (2402) or the underground site on Nukaush (1906). Many remain including the remnants of the Malaach homeworld, the Undim belt (0914). Many bases were collapsed or utterly destroyed but there are at least two undisturbed Nests that still exist in the Ushra subsector, on Argiluu (1317) and Cimmeria (1511).

Strange as it may seem, the Malaach still exist today. The Noxian Spider is actually descended from a dwarf race of Malaach which survived through the female line only. Centuries of adaptation to an alien environment have resulted in the changes to the physical appearance but it still retains the possibility of a genetic throwback to Queens. The only surviving males are the Ashdak Meshukiiba who are unaware of the existence of the Noxian line.

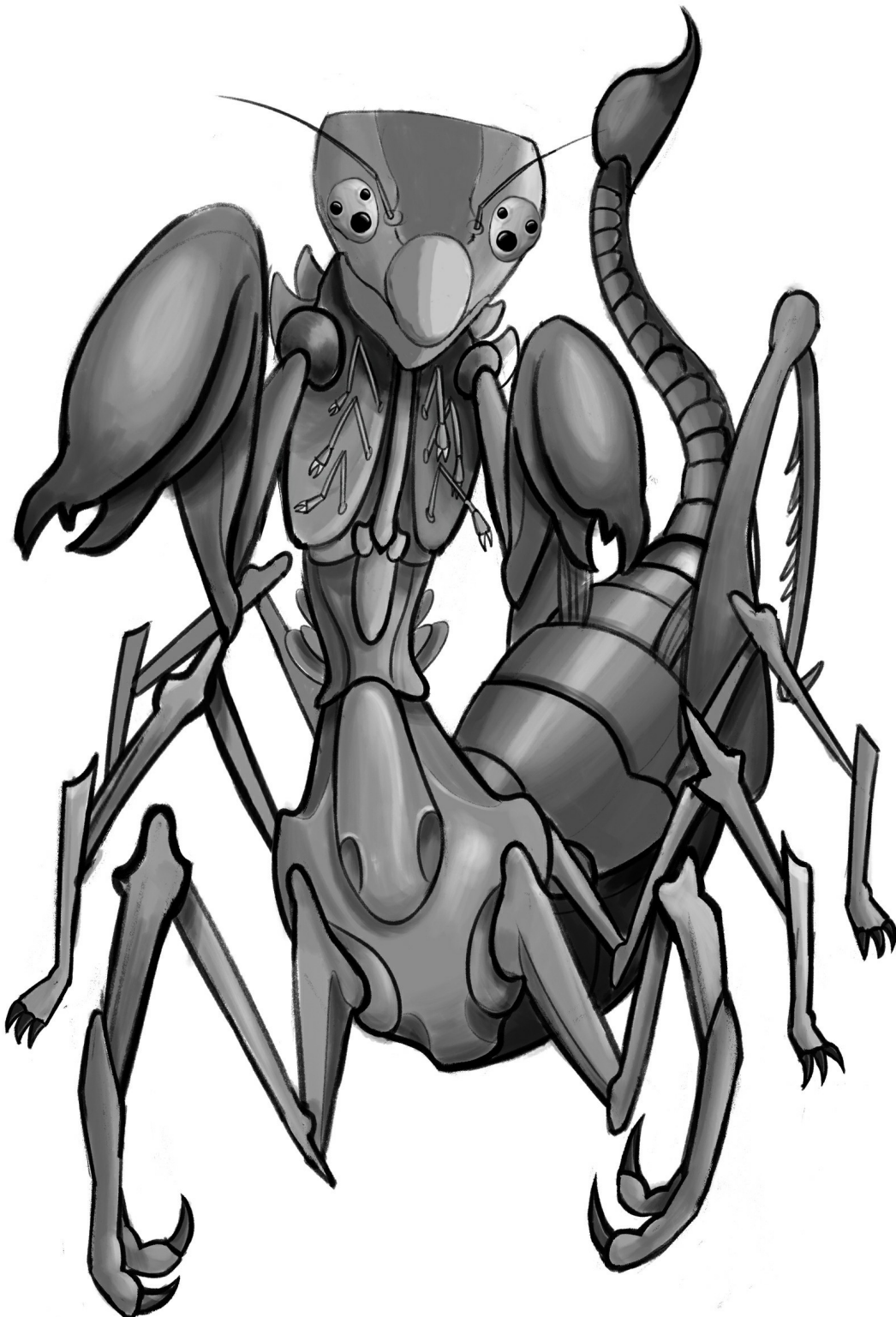
Adventure Hooks: While it is not recommended that the Malaach be resurrected as a full race there are several possible adventure plots available.

1. Aliens. The PCs find a Malaach base either in deep space or on one of the planets mentioned later. By entering the base they activate the life support and accidentally release either adult females or hatching eggs cryogenically preserved. These are not intelligent and should be played as mindless monsters. For added horror allow one of the frozen adults to be a Queen with her ability to kill by psychic means. A male may also be used but remember to play him as an intelligent yet vicious killer. Under no circumstances should a viable Malaach Nest be allowed to survive undamaged by the Ancient’s plague.

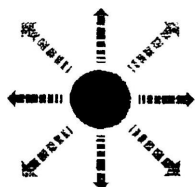
2. Artefacts. The PCs find functional Malaach artefacts or many to activate one of the Malaach defences. The Teleporting Stepping disks or an organically grown Tech 18 starship are obvious possibilities..

3. Documents. The PCs discover a Malaach base and find one of their recording tablets. Through deciphering this, and through mummified remains, the PCs discover that the S'mrii or Hamaran may have been artificially enhanced by the Malaach as part of their scheme to breed better sources for PBT. This may seem to be verified by the fact that both races have ancient stories of a "demonic" race which resembled scorpions.

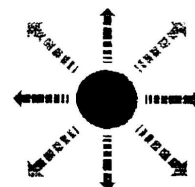
Regardless, there really is no proof that the Malaach actually genetically enhanced other races. It would however explain the Hamaran's unconscious fear of displaying psychic abilities.



Some additional INDISS Stories for Campaign Background



INDISS



INformation DISsemination Services LIC SECTOR-WIDE NEWS

'First Ship' Hoax Uncovered – Silk (2440)

Until six months ago, Silk had been the subject of an archaeological mystery. While legend stated that the original inhabitants had crash-landed on the planet, all attempts to discover the crashed ship had ended in failure. Then, out of the blue, two visitors from Bakhuma announced that, while on a safari to the Equatorial desert, they had found several small metal fragments embedded into the side of a hill. Tests quickly verified that they were indeed of an age and manufacture to possibly be the 'First Ship'. The Clan Lui Ch'en immediately issues a statement proclaiming at long last, the First Ship had been discovered. The excitement was immense.

The two men, Emaki Shardis and Han Derar, agreed to take teams of investigators to the site provided they were registered for the outstanding MCr. 5 reward. This was agreed and several recognisable fragments of Aakhri ship's hull were discovered. Excavations were begun to uncover the rest of the ship. Meanwhile the two men were given the promised reward by the Elder of the Lui Ch'en Clan in a special ceremony. When the two men were discovered attempting to sneak aboard a local freighter bound out-system later that night, alarms bells began to ring. An immediate, and extremely thorough, investigation proved that the site had been 'peppered' with fragments taken, not from the 'First Ship', but stolen from another crashed Aakhri ship currently housed in the Sapphyre Museum of the Dawn.

At the last full meeting of the Council of Elders on Silk it was decided that the two off-worlders that perpetuated the hoax (even if it wasn't proven they conceived the hoax) would be publicly executed. Attempts by the Bakhuman government to have the sentence reduced have been rejected. A statesman for the Lui Ch'en Lao stated today that "These men attempted to steal that which is most precious to the Family, its pride: to try to deceive the Clan is a crime both hideous and stupid. They deserve nothing less than total extermination..."

Singer Freed – Uumirsa (3032)

Hyper-rock media star Kieran Silverdyne, 36 was today found not guilty of murder despite positive identification by over thirty seven eye witnesses. Silverdyne was charged with murdering Emil Sanchez, 28 with a M'nengi war axe at the Steel Rock Bar in Node Three-A immediately after the Brain Damage concert.

The defence proved to the Monad computer node acting as judge in this case, that Silverdyne had a cast-iron alibi for the time of the murder and then proceeded to discredit the eye witnesses' testimony by bringing on several of Silverdyne's fans who had had their faces and bodies bio-sculpted into identical copies of their idol. According to Harri Ransom, acting for the accused there are over one thousand fans who are known to have had bio-sculpture in Silverdyne's image and that there were at least forty five living on Uumirsa. Ransom openly admitted that Silverdyne had had a personal vendetta against Sanchez and further admitted that Silverdyne had publically threatened to —cut-Sanchez's "f_ king head off". However, at the time of the murder Silverdyne had been in his dressing room with a group of friends partying and that the only proof, the eye witnesses, had shown in court that they could not pick Silverdyne out from amidst his look-a-like fans. Silverdyne has stated that he will be cancelling the next concert and will be leaving Uumirsa as soon as possible.

University Professor Jailed as Accessory to Suicide – Sapphyre (2137)

At her trial today, Professor Miriam Stopwell admitted that her experimental teaching methods may have been a prime cause in the mass suicide of three hundred and twenty eight students just prior to the graduating examinations.

Professor Stopwell, who teaches higher dimensional mathematics at the Soppayo University of Sapphyre, placed her students on an experimental programme of studies last year. Using subliminal learning she bombarded her students continuously with advanced theory through every aspects of their lives. Food contained RNA triggers to enhance learning, TriVee was intercepted and reprogrammed with embedded information hidden below conscious perception, along with subsonic messages bombarding them in their University dormitories.

The scheme initially seemed to be working as over 98% of her students gained extremely high pass marks in the first year's exams. As a result, five hundred were selected for a special accelerated course in which the full five year course would be compressed into a single year's study.

Then came the tragedy. Out of the five hundred students undergoing the new intensive study method, 328 killed themselves, as a result the prosecution claimed, of continuous subliminal pressure. A further seventy four are still in hospital after failed suicide attempts. Apparently the massacre occurred, according to Forensic Psychology expert Dr. Suura Meagiis, because of an initial single suicide. Student Ameena Ghagis (23) was worried about the forthcoming final exams, committed suicide in the public refectory. The problem lay as the students came into the refectory and witnessed the body; they took it as a subliminal message to commit suicide. The effect escalated as those few students were then found by other students who then in turn tried to kill themselves who were then discovered by other students from the course, and so on. By the following morning, most of the students were dead or dying. The local Police pumped knockout gas into the dormitories to prevent any further students being affected.

Dr. Meagiis gave evidence that all the surviving students are now completely incapable of independent thought and appear to interpret everything they see or hear as a command. Specialist doctors and therapists, however, are confident that the programming can be overcome in time.

The jury spent little time in convicting the defendant. In sentencing Professor Stopwell, Judge Amelia Dhagudis stated that this experimental teaching method should have been properly tested before exposing students to its unforeseen effects. Had this been done, these youth might still be alive. She sentenced Professor Stopwell to eighteen months of corrective imprisonment and stated that had it been up to here, Professor Stopwell would be facing the death penalty for mass murder.

Professor Stopwell stated afterwards that in her opinion the Sentence was too harsh and that she would be appealing the conviction.

Popsicle Escape foiled by MMSL – Newport (3139)

MMSL today admitted that they had been instrumental in the recapture of Lazarus Joshua, whose escape had gone undiscovered by the Saven prison authorities. Joshua, a trained psychiatrist and warden of Saven Seven Exile Camp during the Civil War, had been sentenced to an indefinite period of cryogenic suspension in 616 for unspecified crimes against humanity. Joshua had managed to arrange his escape during a period of consciousness while the prison authorities carried out a routine check of his chamber. He somehow managed to sabotage his capsule so that it entered thaw down without alerting the prison authorities, he then gained access to a computer terminal and arranged for the transfer of himself and capsule to another prison camp. During the transfer, Joshua escaped and murdered his warder, Jared Alhazd, 43 placing his body in the capsule.

Saven Prison Authority have admitted that checks to ensure the safe arrival of the prisoner had not been properly carried out and that Joshua's escape had gone undetected.

Police Authorities believe that Joshua must have received outside help and wish to interview Sinjit Wan, 29 a professor of Computer Studies at Symmonds College, Medurma University in connection with the incident.

It is believed that Joshua succeeded in hiring a Free Trader to illegally taken him and the capsule, now containing the body of the warder to Newport. Joshua was recaptured when he tried to book passage on the MMSL luxury passenger liner, The Prince Lucan.

Newport Police are currently examining the possibility that Joshua may have been instrumental in the murders of Emil Dinhcara and Edwae Creshau whose bodies have recently been discovered at the Downport, as well as believed to be responsible for the disappearance of Professor Ran Tillotson, a professor of Imperial History on sabbatical. Professor Tillotson was an expert in the Civil War period and was researching his latest thesis on the Exile Camps of Laraa. Police believe that Professor Tillotson may have recognised Joshua and confronted him, an act that almost certainly resulted in his death. Joshua is currently being detailed in a High Security Prison on Newport.

Update

Newport Police have just confirmed that Lazarus Joshua has escaped from Free Market High Security Prison which is run by Secure-R-Us Custodial Services Plc. after killing three guards. Authorities have been unable to confirm how Joshua managed to escape but have warned the public to be on the lookout for him but under no circumstances to approach. Joshua is described as being armed and extremely dangerous.

Head of Naasirka (Dagudashaag) Assassination: New Evidence Uncovered – Kilasir (1803)

At a press conference held earlier today, Arapirlu Urkenim - acting CEO for Naasirka (Dagudashaag), stated that the assassination of the late CEO Nikhasha Amashdag last week was not caused by his bodyguard, Khemgik. This is despite the fact that, during a bomb scare, hundreds saw her draw her weapon and shoot him several times through the head.

Urkenim went on to say that extensive investigation has revealed that in fact it was an unknown assailant using Khemgik's smart gun that had actually assassinated the CEO, not her. Smart Guns are modified versions of normal fire-arms, linked to an internal microcomputer, which in turn is jacked to the operator's neural pathways. Smart guns use a sonic or laser scope to lock onto the selected target.

As the gun passes over the target it picks up the mental command to fire from the operator and triggers the gun. In Khemgik's case, the gun had been reprogrammed by an outside source to target Amashdag and go into autofire mode. It had always been thought impossible for an outsider to bypass the operator and access the gun's internal microprocessor. MNS officers believe that a Lancian or Medurman DataRunner, using some sort of proximity terminal or relay, must have reprogrammed the gun's standby mode with the CEO's heat trace pattern and then arranged for a bomb scare so that all his bodyguards would draw their weapons. It was only a matter of time before Khemgik's gun locked on to the CEO, causing it to target in and fire automatically. As a result of this investigation, Naasirka would no longer be using smart guns in any of its operations. In addition, and Naasirka has ordered all Lancian and Medurman on planet at the time of the assassination, pulled in for questioning.

Port Misha Endangered – Nukaush (1906)

Reports have just reached us that the platform city of Port Misha is under serious threat of collapse when a sinkhole opened up under one of the support pillars earlier today.

The pit, one of two that appeared overnight in the region, is reported to be over 80 metres wide. While the exact depth of the chasm is still not known, it is apparently in excess of 120 metres. The pit opened up without any warning at 26.20 last night and the ensuing tremour caused at least thirty-six people to plunge to their deaths. At the moment the city has stabilised, though starships have been refused permission to leave in case their take-off could disturb the delicate equilibrium. Plans are under way to arrange for the platform to be fully evacuated over the next three days. The port has appealed to the IISS for help to move the platform to a more secure site 1 km away. Such a repositioning would require the equivalent gravitic power of a gray-city to achieve and there is no way the local people could afford the costs alone. To date the IISS has refused to comment though they are apparently considering the request. Should Misha have to be abandoned, the Subsector Government would have no choice but to recognise Port Inferno as the planet's official starport.

No-one knows what causes sinkholes to appear on Nukaush, though up to ten may appear around the planet each year. Despite extensive densometer scans and constant seismographic analysis of the surrounding area, the appearance of the pit caught everyone unawares. An IISS Sensor Officer said 'The first we knew of the pit was when the platform began to suffer tremors. All our scans up to that point showed solid foundations beneath us. We don't even know where all the sand and rock has vanished to. It's a complete mystery'.

Are Androids Intelligent? - Amnesty Interstellar

At a press conference held on Guru, Amnesty Interstellar admitted working with League for the Abolition of Robotic Slavery (LARS) to 'liberate' an experimental Android (Grey Series) from the Kadii station on Nukaush.

SURD immediately filed charges of burglary against the organisation and face counter-charges of kidnapping and slavery. The Grey series of Androids are classed as non-sentient and are fitted with a computer interface at three years old to allow them to follow commands. Amnesty claims that in fact Grey's are born sentient and are lobotomised when the interface is fitted. Under Android Freedoms Act of 22, sentient androids are imperial citizens and cannot be sold without their consent. The purpose of the raid was to obtain a two year-old Grey who could testify in court. Unfortunately the android in question died last month. Amnesty claims this was the result of an assassin while SURD claim the creature was mentally incapable of looking after itself and probably died through neglect. The case is due to go to court next week and SURD hope that they will be successful in obtaining extradition rights on the corpse.

Environmental Award Announced – Bountiful (1934)

Mr. Ikura Lutanic, CEO of Mezantic Industries was awarded the Blue Star Award for Mezantic's role in clearing up the environment of Moloc Bay. The Bay, after four years intensive reclamation work is once again the wildlife haven that it was before this planet [Bountiful] was settled.

Lutanic stated that it was Mezantic's belief that all local companies should help reclaim the environment for the greater good of the people and to this end Mezantic's next programme would be the restoration of the Lloydogo Swamps.

Shortly after the award ceremony a press release from 'The Sons of Earth', an illegal, extremist Eco-terrorist group, stated that "...Any attempt by big businesses to exploit the Lloydogo Swamps in the same manner as Moloc Bay would be met by 'positive' action to prevent any desecration".

Appeal for Funds – Shaakhish (2434)

Today sees the launch of an appeal to raise funds for a life-saving operation for a seven year old child. The organisers hope to raise six million credits to send little Avram Cottingsly to the Zzardman Hospital on Durgaaruur. The Zzardman Hospital is the only centre in the subsector that has the skills and equipment capable of saving Avram's life.

Surgeons at the hospital stated that the operation and follow-up treatment needs to be carried out within the next six months if it has any hope of success at all. The longer the operation is delayed, the less hope there would be for Avram.

Massive Drug Bust - Lumzashgu (2935)

Representatives of the Lumzashgu government today admitted to capturing approximately 100 tonnes of illegal substances with an estimated street value of 2.3 billion credits. The haul included 35 tonnes of Tiekarine and 1 tonne of Pediica Spice. The drugs were being smuggled inside a false drop tank attached to the free trader "Almost Paradise" which was heading for Core Sector. "Almost Paradise" is registered out of Zerpekush/Gadde and is owned by Captain Emil Shadru.

Captain Yan Walters, head of the Subsector's Drug Trafficking Enforcement Agency stated that The ship had only stopped at Lumzashgu for refuelling but, as a result of "Bwap efficiency", was given a full Port inspection. One of the inspectors noticed that the ship had been bought outright and expressed a desire to examine the ship's papers in more detail. Captain Shadru's subsequent behaviour led him to order a full hull inspection which revealed the false tank and its cargo.

Captain Shadru and his crew will be appearing in court to face charges of drug smuggling and if found guilty will receive the death penalty.

History Repeated? – Amshu (1736)

The Imperial Civil War Society (Durgaaruur), a re-enactment and living history group dedicated to reproducing the way of life of our forebears, will be staging the Battle of Amshu, 670. The Society spokesman announced that zero casualties were expected in this repeat battle, unlike the 45,000 who were lost during the real thing. The re-fight will take place over the next two weeks on the uninhabited southern landmass, and will be shown on live TriVee for the duration of the action. Many of those taking part have come here for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, to get together with others from across the subsector. A total of 25,000 people are expected to take part in what is believed to be one of the largest and most complete re-enactments to ever have ever take place in the Sector.

Snatched From the Jaws of Death – Irrii (1737)

Astex LIC has reported a dramatic rescue. Late last month the asteroid mining ship, 'Bee Jae Two', detected a drifting wreck which it attempted to salvage. When the derelict was approached and boarded a sole survivor was recovered. The unidentified female is currently undergoing medical treatment at the home station. Apparently the survivor has not yet recovered consciousness.

Investigators examining the ship was recovered from, concluded that it had been drifting for some time and had the computer banks wiped as well as its transponder destroyed. Back tracking of its course has shown only that it was cutting a path across the planetoid belt and intercepted no inhabited areas at either end of its projected course. From the state of the consumables on board it seems likely that the ship has had only one person on board for (apparently) several months.

Doctors treating the unknown female have told this reporter that the survivor seems to be in reasonably good physical shape, considering the ordeal, but is still in a coma.

Scout Service Gives Warning – Shaakish (2434)

The Commander of the Scout Base today warned that unless action was taken very soon, the life support system of one of the three domed towns on Shaakish was in danger of catastrophic failure. Repairs should have been made over forty years ago when initially detected but was put off over the cost. At the time these repairs would have cost Cr. 10,000, but now it looks likely to exceed MCr. 1 as all the systems have to be replaced and/or realigned. The Town government, however, has said that it cannot afford the repairs.

Drug Smuggler Found Dead – Lumzashgu (2935)

Captain Emil Shadru, 58 was today found dead in his cell. Shadru had recently been arrested after illegal drugs with an estimated street value of 23 million credits had been found in his ship. Shadru had apparently died as a result of taking Laggaa venom. Although all the signs point to it being suicide, the local constabulary have not yet ruled out the possibility that Shadru was murdered to prevent him talking. A full enquiry has been ordered to find out how Shadru had got the miniature canister of Laggaa venom into the cell with him.

Artefact Missing – Napu (3035)

The Naval base here today was put on full alert when an artefact was discovered to have been misplaced during an inspection. After six hours the base was stood down with the item having been recovered. A later statement from the base denied that any artefacts were at the base which is just a training command and has no research facility what so ever.

However the comments made during the state of alert were that an artefact was indeed missing. The Navy would make no further statement apart from repeating the above denial.

Petition – Uumirsa (3032)

A petition has been laid before the subsector authorities today. The petition states “That it is unfit and demeaning in the eyes of all right minded sophonts / subjects of the duke that a body of persons from outside the subsector who are not acquainted with the proud history of the area should be in charge of the maintenance of the war memorials. therefore it is brought to the attention of the Duke so as to inform him that a body of people from within his realm are prepared to selflessly shoulder the burden of maintaining the said memorials and so to this end it is moved that the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service is released of the duty and a group of like-minded people will take up the job for the honour of the subsector and the glory of its people. If this petition meets with the duke's approval then the aforementioned persons will be allowed to exploit any and all naturally occurring resources to enable the group to function without needing funds to maintain themselves and such monuments as are placed in their hands”.

This was a paid advert placement by The Legion for the Remembrance of War Heroes, Uumirsa Branch

Countess Karla to Marry – Sabhaash (2036)

After weeks of speculation, the Countess Karla, through her household, has announced that she is to marry her long-time companion and father of their three young children (ages four years, two years, and three months). The wedding will take place in six weeks, during the local, annual holidays here on Sabhaash. This announcement has been expected for several months by most of the paparazzi and other Nobility Watchers here, although the timing of the wedding, during the local holidays, has caused some surprise as it is normal for events of this nature to be celebrated with an additional public holiday. The Countess (age 34) was delivered of a son just three months past and has already declared that he is to be her successor and heir. The Countess's two daughters are, as is traditional here, not in line for the title of the countess as the current holder of the title is female and now must pass to the Countess's nearest male relative. Until Manuel's birth, this had been a distant cousin, Sir Malforis (age 65) who currently works for Interstellar Arms LIC.

Ninlakim Prime named Subsector City of Culture – Ninlakim (2208)

Despite numerous protests from other worlds, Prime was officially named 'City of Culture' today in an elaborate ceremony presided over by Cllr. Jhadid representing the Ducal Office. The ceremony was marred however by violent scuffles from a large crowd of protesters, mostly off-worlders.

Over three hundred arrests were made though the ceremony continued under military protection without further disruption. Afterwards many of the off-worlders voiced their protest over the decision, stating that the 'culture' personified by this world is both crude and vulgar and does not reflect the sophistication or depth of Arnakhish.

This depth of feeling may be magnified by the fact that Prime is currently hosting the controversial Monte Hall 'Comedy festival'. After the ceremony, Cllr. Jhadid agreed to attend a performance. While many of the acts could be classed as dubious, the shock act had to be a Vilani duo. They managed, during their forty minute set, to offend every major and quite a few minor races. Afterwards Cllr. Jhadid refused to comment on the show though he did state that he would be reporting back to the Committee of Culture & Arts regarding his experiences.

Update

It has just been confirmed that the most talked about sculpture showing at the newly opened Ninlakim Art Gallery was created by an unregistered psionic using telekinesis. The show opened four days ago amid a storm of critical approval for the work of the unnamed artist. At first it was assumed the artist's identity was being hidden as a publicity ploy by the sponsors of the show; UlsNel PLC. Rumours had already begun to circulate that the artist and the shows sponsors were under subsector investigation. The truth was finally revealed earlier today at a press conference called by Jars Ulson, who publically admitted that he had agreed to front the exhibition for an illegal psionic. He stated that, while he would not identify the artist that he was not a Zhodani spy as certain of the press was undoubtedly speculating, but a native of Ninlakim. Government officials have stated that the show will close immediately until the matter is fully investigated.

Virus attack on MNS Confirmed – Diu (1703)

McKellar-Naasirka Security finally admitted earlier today, after several months of rumours, that their security systems had indeed been infiltrated by a computer virus. The virus apparently encrypted captured gigabytes of data, which it refused to unveil until the operator answered a series of questions. If the operator gave a single wrong answer out of a quiz of over five hundred the data was interwoven with slanderous propaganda and fed out of the station as official data updates. While most questions were of a personal nature, the virus was made harder by the fact that certain answers given earlier in the interrogation completely altered the required answers of later questions. MNS have stated that the virus has now been decoded and removed from the system. The origins of the virus are still unknown, though, given the nature of the scandalous updates and the tone of the questions it was definitely not Vilani in origin.

The 'Popsicle Duke' - Court Issues Its Decision—Reshumirak (1025)

Earlier today, the Sector Court of Appeal reached a decision on the inheritance claim of Duke Aar Phoastr of Reshumirak. Supreme Judge Arni Meghan presiding, stated that after long deliberation, the panel had elected to uphold the Ducal Court's decision regarding both title and inheritance. He went on to state that he had been disgusted at the way both parties had attempted to discredit the other side but in the end the panel had acted according to Imperial precedent.

In 622, Duke Aar Phoastr of Reshumirak (b. 531) apparently vanished while visiting Shallows Subsector. Since a will was never found, his daughter Isava, subsequently inherited both his title and estate. This pattern of inheritance continued through the generations with the family substantially increasing in fortune primarily due to their trading links with the Domination. In 1109 the current Ducal family, led by Duke Aris (19), were shocked to learn that someone claiming to be Duke Aar had been revived at a Cryogenics facility in Shallows and had hired a lawyer to reclaim his title, position and wealth. Subsequent genetic tests proved conclusively that Duke Aar was who he claimed to be. When the case went to the Subsector Court in 1111 the judge appointed in favour of the current family stating that Duke Aar had, by entering cryogenic suspension, voluntarily withdrawn from his responsibilities as a planetary Duke and had wilfully failed to leave any evidence of his intentions or wishes.

Duke Aar appealed and produced documentary evidence that claimed to prove that Duchess Isava had in fact known about the Duke's intention to enter hibernation but had concealed the documentation for her own benefit. This was countered by claims that the documents were forgeries. The appeal was heard by the Ducal Court of Justice in 1112. Duke Aris produced evidence to suggest that Duke Aar was clinically insane due to prolonged hibernation while Duke Aar's lawyers produced evidence that Duchess Isava had been barren and had in fact adopted her son Ghia thereby breaking the line of descent through lineage. Duke Aar then produced documentary evidence that proved conclusively that at the time of his leaving it was common knowledge that he would never have agreed to someone not of his lineage inheriting his position.

After almost a year, the Court passed judgment. Duke Aar was found to have abandoned his responsibilities when he entered hibernation. Accordingly it was upheld that the title had been legitimately passed to Duchess Isava who was within her rights to decide who would inherit. However, since a title is generally granted for life, Duke Aar was entitled to hold on to his title for the duration of his life and claim the status but not the Imperial authority. In the matter of the estate, the bench agreed unanimously that Duke Aar was entitled to reclaim a sum equal to his estate on the day he vanished but that the sum would not include any inflation or interest.

Duke Aris of Reshumirak accepted the decree and subsequently released MCr 1.3 to Duke Aar's lawyers. Duke Aar appealed and the case had been on-going until today. At the press conference held immediately after the judgment, Duke Aar said, "While I have accepted the court's judgment regarding my position, in fairness I still feel that I should have been awarded my original estate inclusive of inflation and interest. Instead of MCr 1.3, I should have been awarded MCr. 290. This sum will not even cover my legal expenses." His lawyers have stated that they still have not decided whether or not to appeal to the Emperor. In reply, Duke Aris has released a short press statement thanking the court for delivering a clear and concise judgment that upholds the rights of descendants.

Deportation Order Racially Motivated?—Lumzashgu (2935)

The Government of Lumzashgu requests all Vargr to leave the system. Today the High Council of Lumzashgu bowed to pressure from the population and has issued instructions that all Vargr present in the system are to leave by a date some six weeks hence. This act comes after a series of what were obviously racially motivated attacks on members of the Vargr race. The attacks have come in the wake of the local elections where members of both the extreme right and left wings have been appointed to the local government. It has been suggested that the Imperial authorities may intervene in this situation to either replace the High Council and to protect those Vargr who live in system.

Is The Jester Still At Large? – Upag (0111)

A recent piece of video footage from a bank security camera on Upag has opened up the debate on the death of G. 'Jester' Graham. Convicted on several counts of fraud and embezzlement in 1098, Graham was killed in the Menon-Lore High Security Facility on Upag four years later. The nature of the accident left virtually no trace of his body at the scene leaving some to doubt whether Graham was actually dead and the whole incident an elaborate cover-up for his escape. Genetic tests on the remains were inconclusive but eye-witness reports place 'The Jester' at the scene at the crucial moment. This recent video evidence suggests that Graham may be at large, or someone imitating him, for the recording shows an individual (not unlike Graham) opening a bank account with a large amount of cash. This was a starting point for one of Graham's favourite bank scams. The local police and prison officials have refused to comment. Members of the public are asked to send in any reports of sightings of the Jester into their local INDISS office.

Prize Competition

Win a Cruise of a Lifetime with MMSL Passenger Service

MMSL are offering a Year's free travel across Dagudashaag (including cruise time on their new luxury liners, the Prince Lucan and the Prince Varian) to twenty lucky INDISS readers. The prize consists of ten High Passages and ten Middle Passages with MMSL and affiliated lines. More details of how to enter can be found in the **INDISS Competition section**.

ONLINE RESOURCES

System data and UWP interpretation for Dagudashaag Sector is available online at <https://travellermap.com>

Traveller Library Data can be found at <http://wiki.travellerrpg.com>

Dagudashaag-specific data starts at http://wiki.travellerrpg.com/Dagudashaag_Sector.



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Version 1.1i

In the 1990's a small group of dedicated Traveller fans in the UK set out to fully survey and document their exploration of the Dagudashaag Sector, near the centre of the Imperium.

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These chronicles were subsequently documented in 13 issues of the Signal-GK fanzine. This library data was then subsequently compiled, rewritten and expanded into a comprehensive guide to an entire sector: The Encyclopaedia Dagudashaag.

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