

For Referees Only

*EPIC Adventure 3*  
*Chimera*

**TRAVELLER<sup>®20</sup>**  
*Science-Fiction Adventure in  
the Far Future*

QLI/RPGRealms

CT - Classic Traveller  
T20 - Traveller20  
Gateway Domain

## EPIC Adventure 3

### Chimera

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**Traveller** for the *d20 System*

Science Fiction Adventure in the Far Future

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**Chimera** – “A creature from ancient Terran mythology that is said to have the head of a lion, the body of a goat and the tail of a dragon. Often times it has multiple heads.”

**Chimera** – “An organism combining tissues derived from two or more genotypes.”

**Chimera** – “Chimera combines two distinct movements: the Pax-Imperia of the Third Imperium – the primary civilizing impulse in Known Space – with the zeal of the Loyal Sector Guard to defend the domain from all alien threats. The Emperor sees both movements as incompatible. We see both movements as complementary. The Gateway Domain could be an enormous buffer zone separating Imperial space from the K'kree and Hivers. But the pocket empires between the Imperium and her enemies are too weak to provide protection. So the Imperium must actively spread its civilizing impulse far beyond its present borders.

*And the primary vehicle Chimera will use to achieve this goal is the LSG.”*

*- Excerpt from a secret Chimera Statement of Intent written by Baron Vela Janus.*

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# About This Book

This book contains a fully detailed adventure for *Traveller*. It follows the general style of the original 'Little Black Books' or LBBs published as part of the Classic Traveller product line.

This book contains a minimum of general background data and sufficient specific background to allow it to be used without reference to any other setting or adventure book. The adventure is presented in the standard 'EPIC' format developed by Marc Miller, creator of the *Traveller* game. It can be played straight out of the book or adapted to fit into an ongoing campaign. EPIC 3 is the completion of an EPIC trilogy (EPICs 1 and 2 coming before this Adventure) involving the crew of the scout/courier *Broadside of a Barn*.

It is possible to think of this adventure as being similar to the key episodes in a season of a TV series. Unrelated episodes can be slipped in between the key ones, but eventually the story will reach the series finale. Of course, there may well be another series, and so other adventures may follow this one.

This adventure is set in the Gateway Domain setting described by in the QLI in the *Gateway To Destiny* sourcebook. Possession of this sourcebook will be useful but is not necessary for enjoyment of this adventure. Indeed, *Chimera* could be set in almost any game universe with just a little tweaking.

Events described in this adventure follow on naturally from *Epic Adventure 2: Into the Glimmer Drift* but that adventure is not necessary to run this one. QLI's *Starfall Cluster* supplement describes a region adjacent to area this adventure is played out in, but again this book is not necessary to run *Chimera*.

## THE COLOR CODE

The *Traveller Epics* adventure series includes material set in the various major eras and settings of the Official *Traveller* Universe. While any of them can be tweaked to fit another region, era or even a totally different setting, each Epic sits best in its 'home' setting. To allow the home setting of any given book to be quickly determined, a color code is used for the cover-edge and central stripes. Books are coded as follows:

- 993-1000 period: Blue
- 1107-1116 period: Red
- New Era (1248) period: Orange
- Generic or one-off: Green

## WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

**Please note that this is not a standalone game. It requires that you have access to a set of Traveller rules. The adventure was created for use with the T20 rules system from QLI and the original Classic Traveller rules, but can easily be converted to other versions of the game or even other rules systems.**

Assuming you intend to run this adventure with the T20 rules, you will require at least the T20 Lite rules from QLI. We recommend the following:

- The Traveller's Handbook (T20 Core Rulebook) plus either the T20 Player's Book or a d20 system core rulebook such as the *Dungeons & Dragons™ 3rd*

*Edition Player's Handbook.*

- One or more of each of the following types of dice: four-sided (d4), six-sided (d6), eight-sided (d8), ten-sided (d10), twelve-sided (d12), and twenty-sided (d20).
- Pencil (or pen) and paper for keeping notes about your character and the adventure. Graph paper is also recommended for making maps of places your character has visited.
- If you enjoy playing online, or are interested in playing *Traveller* online, you should also have a copy of *GRIP: Traveller*. *GRIP* (Generic Roleplaying for Internet Players) will allow a Referee and up to eight players to get together via the Internet or a local area network (LAN) and play *Traveller* (or any other RPG) no matter where they are located physically in the world. Visit <http://www.RPGRealms.com> for more information.

## THE EPIC ADVENTURE SYSTEM

This adventure uses the EPIC adventure system created by Marc Miller. The EPIC system is a way around one of the commonest problems with many RPG adventures; the fact that they are very 'linear' in design. In far too many adventures, encounter one typically leads to encounter two, which inevitably leads to encounter three, ad-nauseum. This has several problems. Firstly, the players may not notice a critical fact and thus be left in limbo with no clue how to find the next plot element. Railroading them is sometimes the only solution, and in general railroadng is a common feature of this kind of linear adventure. This can lead to player frustration, since there is little worse than not being captain of your own fate.

Reducing the amount of leading-by-the-nose is fine until one of those gaming groups comes along, who insist on doing everything in the wrong order and generally do violence to the plot of an otherwise great adventure.

The Epic Adventure System provides a new way to design and organize adventures, incorporating enough flexibility that the player characters have the 'freedom to roam' without causing the referee nightmares. Asides, delays and additional adventures can easily be slotted into an Epic Adventure.

An Epic Adventure is broken down into 6 parts:

**The Cast of Characters** – A description of major characters encountered in the course of the adventure, possibly including pregenerated player-characters.

**The Background** – The background provides the Referee with the information needed to prepare himself, and lays the groundwork for introducing this adventure to the players.

**Minor incidents and encounters** – Referred to as Minor Scenes or just Scenes, are encounters or events that involve the player characters in some form. Many are directly related to the adventure, and may provide clues, equipment, or other information and materials needed to eventually complete the adventure. Others are merely to provide diversion and amusement. Scenes, unless noted in their descriptions, do not need to be played in any particular order, and may be sprung upon the player characters when the Referee deems appropriate.

**Critical Plot Elements** – Referred to as Plot Keys, Key Scenes or simply Keys, make up the heart of the storyline for the adventure. They contain vital pieces to the plot that must be played for the adventure to make any sense to the players in the end. You may play any number of Scenes before and after each Plot Keys, but all of the Plot Keys

should eventually be completed in their proper order.

**Chapters** – A Chapter or Act is made up of one or more Plot Keys. They outline the plot to the Referee, and provide tips and information for playing the Scenes and Plot Keys that are contained in the Chapter. In order to complete a Chapter, each Plot Key within must be completed. Each Chapter must be completed, and played in order to successfully run the adventure. Due to the ‘cinematic’ nature of an EPIC adventure, it is easy for the Referee to allow the player characters to temporarily deviate from the current adventure storyline to follow a false lead or pursue another short adventure that has interested them. When you are ready to return the player characters back to this adventure plot line, simply pick up with the next Scene.

**Adventure Checklist** – The Adventure Checklist provides the Referees with a recommended guideline of the order in which various Scenes and Plot Keys in this adventure should be presented to the players. As the player characters complete each Scene or Plot Key, the Referee simply checks it off the list. When every Plot Key in a Chapter has been played, that Chapter has been completed the Referee may begin the first Scene in the next Chapter.

## REWARDS AND ADVANCEMENT

Before embarking upon a *Traveller* game or campaign, it is worth deciding what the pace of advancement will be for participating characters. For one-off games this is not important but if the same characters are going to have future adventures, advancement becomes a major issue.

If too little experience is given out, players may become frustrated. There is always a new skill or feat that a character could have done with having, or that the player really wants to have, and for many people working towards gaining such abilities is an important part of the game. If the distant mountains never seem to be any closer, what is the point of walking towards them?

On the other hand, characters who gain large amounts of experience and other rewards may become overpoweringly powerful. True, a shotgun in the back will be as detrimental to the health of a 20<sup>th</sup> level veteran as a beginner, but skill levels are critical to adventuring success; too much too fast is bad for a game even if it does not make the characters invincible. Thus the Referee should tailor the experience awards suggested by the T20 core rulebook to his or her own game style. In our experience it is better to keep characters a little bit hungry.

This brings up the question of whether to give out experience at the end of each Act or at the end of the adventure. Each Act can be treated as a separate adventure in terms of experience awards. Typically, each Act (or Chapter) is about equivalent to an Amber Zone or Signal GK adventure, leading to the conclusion that it should be worth around 2000XP X the Average party level. This is not a good parallel, since some Acts are quite short and besides, over a 5-Act adventure this adds up to a LOT of experience.

If experience is to be given out at the end of each Act, it is better to use the following system:

Base Experience for the adventure is calculated as per the THB – this is a full adventure so experience award is set as 4,000 XP multiplied by the average party level (at the beginning of the adventure). Half of this is saved up to be awarded at the end of the adventure. The other half is available to be assigned at the end of each Act. It is possible to simply assign 10% of the total to each Act (assuming 5 Acts), but the Referee should

consider assigning greater or lesser percentages to certain Acts if he/she feels that the characters would learn more from the events in that Act than from another.

The experience available for any given Act is subject to the standard multipliers listed in the T20 core rulebook; some acts are just plain more dangerous than others! The 50% block of experience is also subject to multipliers for difficulty of the overall adventure.

Remember that all experience awards are totals, and are then shared among the participating characters. Only characters present in a given Act gain experience for it. When determining who gains experience from the adventure as a whole, the Referee must use judgment. Obviously, characters who were there the whole time should gain the full amount. People who popped in for a single Act should not. If a player brought in a new character to replace one killed or otherwise indisposed, the Referee should count the character as being present for purposes of dividing up the experience but only award a portion of the total experience, based on how long the new character was involved. The rest of the experience entitlement was lost with the dead character.

Using this system, characters who were present for just one or two Acts of the adventure gain some experience, but do not share in the overall end-of-adventure award. Referees also are able to easily deal with the situation where a player brings along three friends to a session in the middle of the adventure, only one of whom comes back to play in the remaining Acts.

### Example

Alice, Bob and Candy play 6<sup>th</sup> level characters through a 5-act adventure. Ignoring difficulty multipliers, this gives a base XP award of 4,000 x 6 = 24,000 points for the whole adventure. The Referee ‘banks’ 12,000 for award at the end, leaving 12,000 available to be divided up among the various Acts. She decides that Act 1 and 2 are worth 1,000 each, 3 and 4 (being much more complex) are worth 4,000 each and Act 5 is worth 2,000.

Alice’s character manages to get killed during Act 2 and is replaced by a new one, who survives to the end of the adventure. She thus gains no experience for Act 1-2 (well, other than being a highly experienced corpse) but gains XP for Act 3,4 and 5.

Bob goes right through the adventure with no mishaps, but complicates matters by bringing his friend Dave along to Act 3. Dave misses Act 4 but manages to turn up for about half of Act 5.

Candy misses the very last session of Act 5 but plays throughout the rest of the adventure.

Experience is awarded as follows:

Act 1: Three characters participate. Experience is awarded: 1000 points divided by 3, or 334 points each.

Act 2: Three characters participate. Experience is awarded: 1000 points divided by 3, or 334 points each. Alice’s character is dead, so this experience is buried with her.

Act 3: Four characters participate. Experience is awarded: 4,000 points divided by 4, or 1,000 points each.

Act 4: Three characters participate. Experience is awarded: 4000 points divided by 3, or 1,334 points each.

Act 5: Three characters participate in the majority of sessions in this Act. The Referee decides that Dave’s relatively trivial contribution should not take experience away from the others and awards 2,000 experience divided by 3, or 1,667 points to each of the three main characters. She gives Dave a token award of a third of this – 555 experience

points.

Final Award: The Referee decides that the adventure was carried by Alice, Bob and Candy, and that Dave's contribution was relatively minor. However, Act 3 was a big one and Dave not only made his character useful but also got involved in the roleplaying. She decides that the experience Dave got from the two Acts he was actually present for is enough of a reward and awards the overall adventure experience among the three main characters. This is 12,000 divided by 3 or 4,000 points each. However, Alice loses part of this award since her character is a replacement. A 3/5 award (the new character was present for Acts 3-5) does not seem fair, since the first two Acts were quite minor. The Referee decides to award the overall experience in the same proportions as the per-Act XP, i.e. Alice loses out on 2,000/12,000 or 1/10 of her possible award.

Candy missed a single session, but the Referee decides that this is of no consequence.

Thus the experience awards for the Acts and the adventure as a whole work out as:

Alice: 1,000 + 1,334 + 1,667 + 3600 = 7,601

Bob and Candy: 334 + 334 + 1,000 + 1,334 + 1,667 + 4000 = 8669

Dave: 1,000 (Act 3) + 555 (1/3 of Act 5) = 1,555

The Referee has decided that although Dave was present in Act 3, a major part of the adventure as a whole, it would represent an isolated incident to him and thus he does not qualify for the overall experience award. This also avoids the problem of players who rarely turn up for a game possessing quite powerful characters whose experience was earned by other players.

Other rewards are of course possible within an adventure. Each Act will normally include opportunities for characters to gain advantages in terms of money, equipment, weaponry and contacts among rich and powerful individuals.

### CHARACTER TYPES AND SKILLS

It is not the practice of QLI to list the skills a team of travellers will need in order to complete any given adventure (though skills required to get hired for the job might be listed). This is because **Traveller** is an open-ended game, and there are a great many possible paths to success. Almost any group, of any level, with any set of skills, can complete this or any other **Traveller** adventure if they are able to think creatively and maximize their strengths. There are no encounters or challenges in this adventure aimed at any type or class of character. Different characters will use different approaches and may struggle in some circumstances, but adventuring is not about having the right weapons, skills or equipment to meet a challenge; it is about meeting what the universe throws at you with what you have and finding a way to win – or at least survive.

A small Jump-2 vessel such as a far trader or a scout/courier is necessary to run this adventure. The adventure presents details of a typical scout/courier for this purpose.

If the characters have a starship then they should be able to operate it. This implies that they need at least some level of skill between them in the relevant disciplines: Piloting the ship, navigating between systems, running the engineering plant and manning the ship's weapons (if any). However, there is no set level required for such skills. The only other skill that will become very useful in this adventure is "Use Alien Devices". It is not necessary for anyone to have this skill, but it may well come in handy.

The following data is provided for the benefit of the Referee. How much of it can be determined by the players, and with what degree of accuracy, is a matter for the Referee to decide. In many cases a simple search on the ship's computer or any library terminal will suffice to provide at least the bones of the information.

### THE THIRD IMPERIUM

The Third Imperium is a human-dominated empire of some 11,000 star systems. It is not a vast, monolithic structure. The time lag inherent in interstellar communications makes this impossible. Instead, the Imperium resembles a vast federation of worlds that agree to certain common practices, and allow the Emperor and his subordinates to deal with foreign policy, military affairs and similar multi-world considerations while maintaining control of their internal affairs.

### INDEPENDENT WORLDS AND CLIENT STATES

Many of the worlds along the border of Gateway Domain are to a greater or lesser degree 'client states' of the Imperium. In effect, they are friendly independents who allow Imperial Navy vessels to use their ports and patrol their systems as a matter of course. Trade links are strong and relations generally cordial. Joint naval operations are not uncommon and extradition treaties are in place. Imperial-registered ships arriving in port on such worlds are treated more or less as if they were local shipping – papers are normally accepted at face value and customs checks are no more rigorous than usual. In return, client worlds are guaranteed protection against aggression and can request aid from the Imperium in times of trouble.

Some worlds have formal Client status and are listed as such in the star system data. Good relations with the Imperium and its citizens can be taken for granted. Some other worlds are a kind of 'informal client state' with friendly relations but no formal treaty in place. Some worlds listed as Independent fall into this group.

Other independent worlds are truly that; non-aligned. Some are actually quite hostile to the Imperium and will harass ships coming through their ports with endless paperwork or intense customs inspections. Actual violence against Imperial citizens acting lawfully would be a very stupid mistake, but some worlds will do everything they can to discourage Imperial attention and Imperial visitors.

The majority of Independent worlds are fairly neutral in their attitude to Imperial citizens, and treat them no better or worse than any other visitors. Attitudes do shift, however, due to internal or external factors.

### THE GLIMMERDRIFT TRADE CONSORTIUM

The Glimmerdrift Trade Consortium (or GTC) is a loose alliance of worlds tied together by economic, rather than political, ties. The Consortium is dominated by the high-tech economy of Fal, at the Trailing edge of Glimmerdrift Reaches sector. It is not a regional alliance but includes worlds scattered across the Glimmerdrift and Crucis Margin sectors.

Based upon trade and industry, the Consortium supports a range of agendas among its members, and while internal politics can be rather 'vigorous', the Consortium is not

expansionistic. Its economic influence is felt across the sector, and there can be no doubt that it can bring considerable power to bear if it chooses, but for the most part the worlds of the Consortium – and the Consortium itself – are content to mind their own affairs. Occasionally a world petitions to join; most such requests are politely turned down.

Member worlds of the Consortium have very different governments, which deal with their own internal affairs. External matters like foreign policy (such as it is) are the concern of the Mercantile Council, a representative body which allocates votes to member worlds based upon the size of their planetary economy. The Council is divided into numerous factions, and any issue requires an impressive amount of favors, influence and outright bribery (of individuals and worlds) to achieve a decisive majority. For this reason, Consortium affairs are normally in a state of “chaotic stability”, where changes are minor and gradual despite furious politicking on all sides. Outsiders find this situation rather exhausting to enter into, which effectively keeps foreign firms out of Consortium-influenced markets. This is probably not a coincidence.

While the merchant cruisers of the Consortium range far across the Sector (and even into Imperial space), firms based out of the Consortium worlds tend to be local in nature, and have few offices outside the member worlds.

The Consortium has a fair proportion of non-humans among its populace, including Vargr and some Wanderers, who have been integrated in local culture for centuries. Relations with the 2000 worlds were at one point almost cordial, though the activities of the Lords of Thunder have soured this relationship in recent years.

Border arrangements exist with neighboring powers, but only as negotiated by individual member worlds. There are few formal arrangements and treaties concerning the GST as a whole – it prefers to make peace through manifest benefits to both parties rather than the formal wording of a treaty.

The various member worlds maintain local defensive forces and a few Jump-capable warships, but the nearest the Consortium has to a Navy is the so-called “CP-CK Fleet”. This is a collection of small warships (nothing bigger than a destroyer) on loan from various worlds, assigned to “CP” (commerce protection) and “CK” (corsair killing) duty. Seepies and Seekers (as they are colloquially referred to) range beyond the systems of the Consortium, and at times have been known to assault and occupy known pirate havens.

The majority of Consortium merchant cruisers are armed. The larger ones carry bay weapons but none have spinal mounts. However, these vessels are able to defend themselves against most raiders and can even project force at a modest level, should the Consortium ever need to.

Each planetary navy and merchant line has its own uniform, though centuries of co-operation have resulted in commonality of insignia and ranks, creating a modicum of corporate identity among the diverse forces of the Consortium.

## **FEDERATE REPUBLIC**

A very loose collection of worlds situated to Coreward-Trailing of the Imperial border, the Federate Republic has little central authority, nor much desire for any. Its member worlds are bound by mutual defense and economic treaties, and a representative assembly is maintained to resolve disputes between members.

The Federate is strongly Solomani in terms of culture and outlook, though its links to the Solomani Confederation are tenuous at best. Within broad limits, member worlds are

free to establish their own foreign policy, so relations with other polities vary from world to world. The Spinward worlds of the Federate are somewhat influenced by the Imperium, to the point where Imperial merchants and even navy ships are frequent visitors. Vessels from the Glimmerdrift Trade Consortium are also frequent visitors, and for the most part are welcome.

The Federate maintains a fleet of light patrol craft to deter piracy on the Shashka Main and along its trade routes, but lacks anything resembling a real fleet. For the most part the Federate prefers to mind its own business and let others do likewise. Some member worlds are more active, however.

## **THE LOYAL SECTOR GUARD**

The Loyal Sector Guard (LSG) is a powerful but unofficial military organization which exists within the Domain of Gateway. Its stated purpose is to defend the lives and property of Imperial citizens from all threats – i.e. the same as the official Imperial armed forces.

The LSG is formed from assets donated by various members: noble household troops, mercenary units, planetary armed forces, corporate security units and some specially raised forces. It consists mainly of ground-combat units equipped as mid-tech light infantry (i.e. security forces rather than battlefield units) but does have a number of starships and “real” military units among its ranks. The LSG has its own rank and pay structure, a uniform, and a strict code of conduct for its members, all of whom take a personal oath of loyalty to “The Imperium, her Citizens, and the Emperor”. The stated mission of the LSG is to protect the citizens of Ley Sector against all threats. The LSG is technically forbidden by Imperial Law. While the law does not prohibit the formation of properly accountable mercenary forces in the service of a corporation or an individual, the creation of a widespread organization paralleling the Imperial Armed Forces is specifically prohibited. Despite this, the LSG has not been shut down. It is led by several powerful figures in the sector, and has some popular support due to its policy of sending forces to protect places the Navy and Army cannot or will not. LSG personnel have met their deaths in the defense of citizens, and (other than by its existence) the LSG remains strictly within the law. Many LSG members are well-known loyalists and some are Imperial officials whose integrity is beyond reproach.

Other members (and quite prominent ones, at that) may be motivated by political considerations. Tension with the official armed forces is considerable, but it is recognized that closing down the LSG would be very unpopular with the citizens they protect. Only time will tell if the LSG manages to establish itself as a power in the region, but already its influence is being felt.

## Glimmerdrift-Reaches Sector

Most of Glimmerdrift Reaches sector lies well beyond the borders of any major state, so while influences are felt the region is in fact somewhat fragmented. Populations are predominantly human, and Vargr are less common than in Ley Sector to Coreward.

Star density is rather low in the central area of the sector. Some astrographers consider this region to be an extension of the Darksky Gulf (or Delphi Rift), though it contains far more stars than what is normally considered Rift space. The low-density central area is known as the Glimmer Drift, since it contains numerous clouds of interstellar gas. It is bounded to Spinward-Rimward and Coreward by a region of true rift some 2-5 parsecs deep. This rift presents navigation problems, as it can only be crossed by Jump-2 ships at two points, though once across the gulf, traversing the Glimmer Drift is somewhat easier.

The Glimmerdrift Reaches sector is a battleground for Solomani and Imperial agents trying to create sympathy for their respective causes. The Solomani could use neutral worlds in the Reaches as a base for commerce raids into the Imperium (indeed, it is suspected that they already are doing so), and are constantly seeking alliances or basing agreements. Thus many worlds are equipped with Solomani weaponry sold at knockdown prices in return for a little political favor. Both sides are using all the tools at their disposal, from flag-showing naval vessels and economic assistance to covert action and blatant strongarm tactics to prevent the other from gaining an advantage.

The vast majority of worlds in the region are non-aligned, but 14 are controlled by the Loyal Nineworlds Republic (which, rather obviously, contained only nine when it was founded). The Republic exerts a limited influence within 3 parsecs of its border. IN practical terms this means that Republican naval ships can be encountered in the systems of Adimshome, Dug, Naki and Ishkuli and less frequently in Duru Gialt and Arshur. Trade ships range further afield.

### TRI-EMPIRE SUBSECTOR

Located on the trailing border of Imperial space, Tri-Empire subsector contains two Imperial worlds on the extreme trailing border of the Imperium, and a host of independent worlds as well as systems aligned to the Glimmerdrift Trade Consortium. Piracy is a problem in the region, with pirates from as far as the Raidermarch and Granicus preying on commercial traffic. Both Federate Republic and Imperial patrol vessels do sweep the subsector, but Republic ships are few and far between, and the Imperial Navy is stretched to the limit by the Solomani Rim War raging two sectors away. The primary astrographic groupings in the subsector are the Lunber Cluster of 5 worlds, the Gildensky Quartet in the center of the subsector, and the Eda Group (6 worlds) to rimward. Not every world in the subsector is detailed below: the referee, as always, is free to outline the other worlds in the subsector.

### WORLDS OF THE TRI-EMPIRE SUBSECTOR

**Allegiance Codes:** **Im** - Imperial; **Xx** - Non-Aligned; **GT** - Glimmerdrift Trade Consortium

Name	Loc.	UWP	Codes	PBG/Allegiance/Stellar
EPMA	1702	C10099C-B	In	414 Im K1 V
Iir	1803	C787366-6		203 Xx K5 V
459-418	1807	E9D0654-7	De Ni	204 Xx M4 II
Bubi	1810	E464313-7		903 Xx G7 V
PINKATTO	1901	C10097B-D	In	803 Im K2 V
Se	1903	B210351-A		304 Xx F1 III M7 D M7 D
Nishlishurkha	1904	A545622-B		820 Xx F6 V M8 D
DREESEN	1906	D343985-6	In	703 Xx M1 V M3 V M8 D
Radii	2002	C41045A-A		414 Xx F0 IV
LUNBER	2003	C265ACH-9		704 Xx K0 V F6 D
Keystone	2005	C747666-8	Ag Ni	102 Xx K5 V
Adikeen	2007	E88A644-5	Ni Ri Wa	203 Xx K6 V
Emka	2107	C100622-A	Na Ni Va	500 GT G1 V
Darvin's Hope	2110	D332667-7	Na Ni Po	604 Xx A1 V
Anden Tor	2202	A548241-D		801 Xx G4 V
Ardi	2204	B100423-D	Va	910 Xx M9 III
Dumiikukha	2205	C100779-6	Na Va	413 Xx G4 V M1 D
Keepsake	2207	X300300-2	Va	515 Xx G2 II M7 V
Saga's End	2209	C571845-9		914 Xx M3 V
519-036	2210	B5A1618-8	Ni	100 Xx M3 V M7 D
Independence	2301	D326588-7		720 Xx M4 V
West of Wonder	2304	B110653-E	Na Ni	304 GT M3 V A7 D
Shukikikar	2306	X553400-3	Po	105 Xx F7 V
User-Friendly	2309	D100300-5	Va	310 GT K2 V
Liberty	2401	B7647BC-9	Ag	603 Xx K0 V G5 D
Ir	2407	B697733-6	Ag	812 Xx F4 V
Idam Lee	2410	A410849-E	Na	604 Xx M3 V M4 D



# World Data

**MAP LEGEND**

**WORLD CHARACTERISTICS**

- No Water Present
- Water Present
- Asteroid Belt

**BASES**

- ★ Naval Base
- ▲ Scout Base
- △ Way Station

**TRAVEL ZONES**

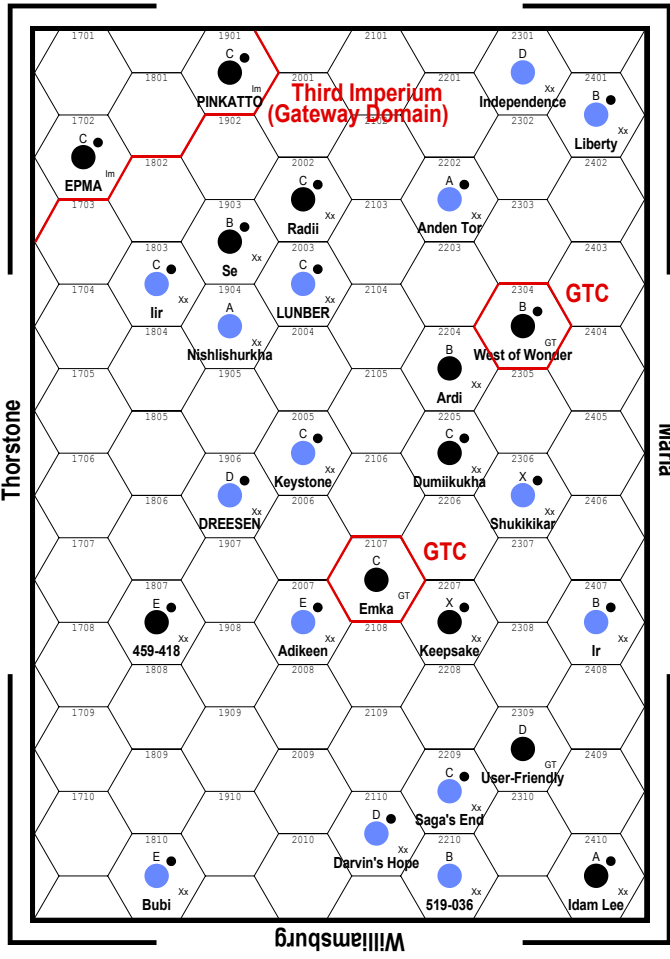
- Amber Zone
- Red Zone

**POPULATION**

Secundus under one billion  
PRIMUS over one billion

World names in red are subsector capitals

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P



**Tri-Empire Subsector**  
(subsector C of Glimmerdrift Reaches sector)

## PINKATTO

**Pinkatto** 1901 C10097B-D In 803 Im K2 V

A high-tech industrialized airless world with 8 billion population on the very trailing edge of Imperial space, Pinkatto is used semi-officially as a forward staging base for Imperial Navy patrols out over the border, and while the charts do not show anything even remotely resembling a naval base, in fact the Imperial Navy maintains various small installations on-planet and in orbit. The world itself is balkanized, with three industrialized nation-states all co-operating on defense and foreign affairs, but maintaining their own nominally democratic local affairs. A proto-world government, simply called the Secretariat, is responsible for dealing with the Imperial authorities. Many Imperial and a few non-Imperial corporations maintain manufacturing facilities on Pinkatto.

## RADII

**Radii** 2002 C41045A-A 414 Xx F0 IV

Located just trailing of the Imperial border, Radii is an important jumping-off point for merchants traveling into the Glimmerdrift Reaches and Crucis Margin Sectors. The world itself is a large rock with a trace atmosphere. Despite being a frontier starport, the law level is very high with weapons of any kind prohibited. Prospectors and mining operations represent most of the local industry, mining the asteroid belt that lies very close to the main world. Radii itself has an asteroid defense system to ensure asteroids do not smash into the planet. The system, consisting of three orbital missile platforms equipped with long-range delivery systems and specialized payloads, has twice deflected potential planet-killers from destroying Radii.

## NISHLISHURKHA

**Nishlishurkha** 1904 A545622-B 820 Xx F6 V M8 D

Settled by Vilani refugees during the fall of the First Imperium, the warm jungle-world of Nishlishurkha was never a very successful colony. Initial successes degenerated into a battle for survival as the colonists fought the rather numerous and nasty local wildlife, which includes various large hungry carnivores. Nishlishurkha's problems prevented any subsequent influx of colonists and the world remained a backwater through the Rule of Man. Virtually all the colonists died off during the Long Night, and the local wildlife re-asserted itself. Help came at the dawn of the Third Imperium with a new wave of settlers from other worlds who wished to exploit the Nishlishurkha's natural mineral resources. A high tech mining city was built with a massive wall to keep the wildlife from taking over and a decent starport created to service the burgeoning numbers of bulk freighters transporting ore offworld. The wall remains in place to this day, with thrill-seekers taking part in rather dangerous hunting tours with experienced guides beyond the city.

## KEYSTONE

**Keystone** 2005 C747666-8 Ag Ni 102 Xx K5 V

A warm mid-tech agricultural world in the middle of the subsector, Keystone is, as the name implies, a key agricultural producer in Tri-Empire, exporting much of its agricultural

production particularly to Dreesen and the teeming billions who live on Lunber. Some of Keystone's production is also exported to the Imperial border worlds of Pinkatto and Epma. Keystone is in fact an Imperial colony and is unofficially a client state of the Imperium. It is likely that in the next few years Keystone will petition for formal inclusion into the Imperium.

## ADIKEEN

Adikeen      2007 E88A644-5      Ni Ri Wa      203 Xx      K6 V

A cool waterworld settled by Solomani at the twilight of the Rule of Man, Adikeen shows signs of a violent past, with numerous shallow undersea volcanoes as well as deep fissures on the sea floor. The planet has not been studied in any detail to determine the kind of planetary changes that have occurred. During the Long Night the colonists regressed to TL-5 and never advanced any further. The planet was forgotten about during the 2000 years of darkness, only receiving visitors after the founding of the Third Imperium. Adikeen provides ample resources for the small population, although the seas were, and still are, treacherous due to powerful winds and frequent storms. The population is restricted to a tiny archipelago of islands near the equator, with the largest island covered by the only city, Keranasar. The starport, little more than a homing beacon, electrified fence and a large pad of concrete, receives few visitors. Few aircraft fly in the atmosphere because of the powerful unpredictable winds. Some ships and boats ply the waters between the islands, but most transport between the islands is by submarine – the safest mode of transport. The world's primary export is an unusual plankton that gives the seas their characteristic silver shimmer – these plankton contain compounds prized by offworld pharmaceutical corporations and are quite valuable.

## Referee's Overview

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### PLAYING OUT THE ADVENTURE

The scout/courier *Broadside of a Barn* (or whatever Jump-2 ship the group has) is docked at the downport of the Imperial border world of Pinkatto. Characters in existing campaigns may begin anywhere in the subsector, but will eventually end up traveling to Pinkatto. The Referee can arrange this in any plausible manner; a charter delivery of urgent cargo would be a suitable means.

If the characters have finished EPIC Adventure 2: *Into the Glimmer Drift*, the Imperial Navy will have completed the refit of their ship and the group will be looking for work, possibly beyond the border again. The Acts in this adventure are written under the assumption that the characters have the *Broadside of a Barn* as their ship, though any suitable vessel can be easily substituted.

Regardless of where the characters begin, they will be approached on Pinkatto by an Imperial Navy courier who salutes stiffly and hands the group a holo-message. Inserting the message into a holographic projector, a tall robed figure appears. He is Baron Vela Janus, an Imperial noble and the Archduke's representative in the subsector. Apparently the group's reputation has preceded them and they are invited to the Baron's residence, a penthouse on top of a soaring skyscraper on Pinkatto.

The Baron greets the group, asking them to dine with him, and then offers to employ their services on various special missions. The Baron introduces the group to Professor Mileous Telmar, a human geologist and archeologist in the service of the Baron. Telmar needs a starship and security personnel for a trip to the independent world of Adikeen to undertake some sort of survey mission. The Baron offers not only monthly salaries, but to pay for the ship's mortgage and running costs while the group is in his employment.

Not offered anything else remotely as lucrative, the characters will most likely undertake the mission. The ship should make the short trip to the waterworld of Adikeen. Along the way the characters will find out a little more about Telmar and the Baron's fascination with the world of Adikeen. The 2 million locals on Adikeen greet the scout ship as something of an oddity, rarely receiving starship traffic. The locals seem cowed, almost awed by the presence of the professor and a starship from the Imperium.

The professor modifies the scout ship's sensors arrays to undertake a detailed mapping of the waterworld's vast and wild oceans, and eventually finds a 200km long sea wall at a depth of 150-200m under the ocean. The "wall" is exactly straight. Telmar unpacks his largest cargo package, a small submersible, to investigate. The local government willingly offer to assist the Professor in any way they can, with a TL-5 submarine and research ship of their own. Together, the three craft investigate the anomaly. Along the way the subs are attacked by undersea creatures and experience other problems which hinder progress. Eventually the subs find a large undersea pyramid. Telmar and the characters eventually find a way inside, where they find the ruins of a lost civilization.

The "sea wall" is in fact hollow, part of a grav-train system that criss-crosses the entire planet. The characters manage to re-activate the grav-train system simply by entering one of the abandoned trains. The characters also discover within the pyramid a TL-17 antimatter powerplant. The powerplant is still running, powering the grav-train system. They also find a chamber within the pyramid filled with low berths. Humanoid skeletons inside the berths, long dead, pointing to an ancient human civilization. Local pirates who

apparently regard anyone from the Imperium with hatred, attempt to stop the professor and kill the Imperials in an attack on the submarines and the research ship. The characters have been detailed to provide security and will earn their pay protecting Telmar.

The powerplant malfunctions causing power spikes in the power distribution system and setting up a power surge that threatens to blow up the pyramid, with unforeseen consequences. Help arrives in the nick of time in the form of the Baron and his mercenary cruiser, but there is a shocking development when the Baron finally makes planetfall.

### Referee

This adventure entails the characters undertaking the search for the ruins, and then trying to stop the power surge from destroying the pyramid as well as stopping a pirate attack. The locals can only be of limited assistance with their TL-5 technology. The characters may offer exotic solutions to these challenges, and the more innovative should be rewarded with success to varying degrees. But the final challenge will come when the Baron arrives in orbit in the nick of time, and helps shut down the powerplant. The locals greet the Baron as if he is a god, but he treats them with utter contempt. It appears that the Baron is ruling the planet by force and intimidation through superior technology. The Baron even executes a local in front of the group's eyes and does not bat an eyelid.

The characters, originally faced with an alien enigma, have instead come across corruption and brutality from one of the Emperor's trusted representatives. Largely immune from censure outside Imperial space, the Baron appears to have taken control of a defenseless independent world. The characters are suddenly assisted from an unexpected quarter – one of the Baron's trusted bodyguards covertly contacts the characters and tells them of the Baron's plans – a plan to impose Imperial control on the subsector by unsavory means under a project simply known as *Chimera*. This small group primarily uses Loyal Sector Guard units to further its goals, but a handful of *Chimera* operatives operating in the Imperial armed forces are also at work furthering the Baron's plans.

The characters are faced with mortal danger by this time. How will they react? What will they do to get out of this situation? Will they attempt to reach the Imperium and warn the authorities of the Baron's damaging actions? Will they help the local resistance against the Baron? Will they even join the Baron in his quest? This question of morality must be answered by the crew of *Broadside of a Barn*, a question that cannot ever be answered with slick talking, mindless violence or dazzling technology.

Rumors can be imparted to characters through any means the referee desires: chance meetings in starports, careless hints from customs officers, idle gossip or reading the local vid-tabloids. Rumors should be presented without any guideline as to their truth or otherwise. Rumors can be imparted to mislead, or guide the characters.

## RUMORS

- Some worlds in the subsector are decidedly anti-Imperial – Imperial ships are shunned in some ports. Rumors are rife of the Imperium throwing its weight around in the Tri-Empire subsector, although no-one can point to specific actions the Imperium has taken.
- Outworld Mercantile LIC, an Imperial shipping corporation based in the Delta Quadrant of Ley Sector, is rumored to be smuggling drugs and arms to independent worlds outside the Imperial border.

- Droyne ships all the way from Crucis Margin sector have been sighted in the region.
- A Raidermarch commerce raider was sighted in the Idam Lee system a few weeks ago , where it attacked a local freighter.
- Keystone, an Imperial colony, is likely to petition in the next few years for formal inclusion into the Imperium.
- Adikeen's Government is very weak and there is an active resistance movement of some kind on the planet.
- A Solomani warship was sighted in the subsector a few months ago. It is not known where it was heading or what kind of ship it was.
- 807-946, a world just to coreward-trailing in the Outworld subsector, has recently opened its borders to external trade; there are numerous trade opportunities available.
- Keranasar Island, site of Adikeen's primary city of the same name, is seismically unstable and is prone to earthquakes.
- The silver plankton that gives Adikeen its particular shimmer have special pharmaceutical properties that are used in the manufacture of broad-spectrum anti-toxins.

# Plots and Episodes

## ACT 1: COURTING THE COURT

*The characters receive an intriguing offer of employment from a powerful Baron.*

### SCENE 1: INVITATION (KEY SCENE)

*Broadside of a Barn* has arrived back from the Glimmerdrift and has been refitted courtesy of the Imperial Navy on the Imperial border world of Pinkatto. There are three starting points for this adventure. This adventure could be a lead-on from *EPIC 2, Into the Glimmerdrift*; the adventure could be played as a standalone, or the adventure could be slotted into an existing campaign. Whatever the starting point, the characters are looking for new opportunities when they are approached on Pinkatto by an Imperial Navy courier, who gives them a holo-message. The holo-message will have to be amended slightly if the adventure is not being played as follow-on from *EPIC 2*, where the characters managed to locate a lost experimental Imperial Navy vessel in the Glimmerdrift and gained the favorable attention of the Navy.

"I am instructed to wait while you view the message," says the courier. The message is inserted into a holo-projector on the scout/courier, and an image of a tall man in flowing Imperial robes appears.

"I am Baron Vela Janus, the Arch-Duke's representative in the Tri-Empire subsector. You people have apparently been quite busy, helping the Imperial Navy and the Emperor's cause against the Solomani Confederation. I congratulate your good selves for your efforts. I invite you to dine with me at my residence on Pinkatto Prime. The courier has transport waiting, if you wish to accept my invitation."

The image flickers out. The courier steps up to the group and gives each a velvet box. "A gift, from Baron Janus," he says. Inside each is a beautiful platinum and gold ring set with the symbol of the Third Imperium, the Imperial sunburst. The rings are worth about Cr1500 each. The characters should accept the invitation at this juncture. It is not every day you are invited to speak to a representative of the Archduke of the Gateway Domain!

The characters are flown in a waiting G-Carrier to the main city on Pinkatto, Border City. Amongst the buildings, a huge two-kilometer high skyscraper arcs into the black sky of the airless world. The G-Carrier climbs up the side of the building for what seems like an eternity until it slides smoothly into a docking port three levels from the very top of the structure. The G-Carrier door opens, and two guards, armed with autopistols and wearing cloth armor, welcome the characters and show them to a large open room filled with plush, comfortable furniture, and extravagant but garish paintings and sculptures. Following the arc of the building, a huge curved window reveals the world outside, a shimmering cityscape set against the black sky and the glowing gas clouds of the Glimmer Drift.

### SCENE 2: JANUS (KEY SCENE)

The room is empty, lights dimmed. Several figures enter from the opposite end, one being the very tall – Baron Vela Janus, flanked by several men and women. All hold drinks in their hands. "Gentlemen! Welcome. Please, sit! Enjoy the view? What drinks would you like?" The group is offered seats by Janus near the windows, overlooking the planet. The Baron asks each character their history and background. He appears fascinated with everyone's story, and wants to know every detail of the search for the missing Imperial Navy ship. "I'm

a Navy buff you know – I used to serve in the command section of a Heavy Cruiser." The Baron proudly shows the group pictures of the ship he served on. (This is in fact part of a 'reinvented' life history he has established – he never served in the Imperial Navy).

The night goes on, and the group is served a memorable dinner. Anyone who enquires about the Baron's two beautiful female companions are told they are Janice and Fleur, his two wives. Polygamy is legal on Pinkatto, perhaps a reason why Janus lives on the world. Janice and Fleur say little, but laugh a lot. Two strapping men also flank the Baron, both impeccably dressed. One was introduced earlier as Captain Marcus Janicin, ex Imperial Marines. He says little, but intently studies the characters. The other man is also a bodyguard of the Baron, but says even less.

Janus offers his views on the current situation in Gateway. "It's insane, our new Arch-Duke, relocating to that iceball world – what's it called? Annapabar! Yes! Have you been there? Can't recommend the location, but I guess he knows what he is doing. It is a great strategic location... Those Solomani – bunch of lunatics. Do they honestly think they will defeat the might of the Imperial Navy? They haven't got a show, mark my words. We will retake Diaspora, retake Terra, and crush their movement once and for all. Yes, I'd love to be there right now..."

"The Archduke leaves me to it down here you know. I only oversee two Imperial worlds, so much of my time is spent... out there..." The Baron gets up, walking to the window, wistfully pointing to the beautiful Glimmer Drift clouds dancing in the black sky. "Isn't it beautiful gentlemen? And it's all out there, beyond the Imperial border, waiting for us to claim it in the Emperor's name..."

Janus turns to the group. "Which is why I need you good people. You all know the Glimmerdrift Reaches to a greater degree than many Imperials. I want you on my payroll, to assist in bringing the Imperium's name to the Tri-Empire subsector. We can assist those worlds out there, give them the stability of Empire!"

Although Janus sounds a tad melodramatic, he is genuine in his feelings. He offers the group the following deal:

#### The Offer

The Baron offers to pay the monthly mortgage on the scout ship (Cr14,170 per month), plus running expenses for the ship (fuel, crew overhead – about Cr10,000 per month). In addition, the services of each character are retained, each offered Cr6000 per month. This amounts to almost Cr50,000 per month (assuming 4 characters), a good deal for the characters considering it would cost the Baron Cr27,000 month at standard rates to hire a scout/courier and crew.

#### Referee

The Baron is genuine about employing the characters but he is in fact, insane. He controls his demeanor to a great degree, almost appearing false at times. But he is very wealthy and obviously believes he is on a divine mission to bring Imperial control to worlds outside the Imperium. Characters with sense motive skill (CT: Streetwise) will be able to detect the genuine zeal of the Baron. He also genuinely wishes to employ the characters. Those with psionics skill will not be able to read the Baron's mind. He is himself psionically aware, and can shield his mind from probing. If any characters attempt psionic communication with he will simply say telepathically, "It's fine you should try to read my mind. I would do the same in your position."

The group may want to negotiate a higher rate. The Baron will only go up to Cr7000 per month per character, no more. It is a good deal so the characters should be encouraged to accept. The contract is for a minimum 3 month period, with further 3 month blocks should the characters or the Baron wish.

The Baron's secret goal to bring independent worlds into the Imperial fold is called Operation *Chimera*, or simply *Chimera* to those who are involved. The *Chimera* Group actually consists of several notable people in the area including minor nobles and several corporations including the Outworld Mercantile LIC, a shipping corporation dealing in drug and arms smuggling beyond the Imperial border. (Outworld Mercantile's covert operations are covered in some detail in the forthcoming EPIC Adventure: *Merchant Cruiser*).

Baron Janus is the driving force of *Chimera*. Outworld Mercantile is not attempting in its own right to convert Imperial worlds – their senior management is involved in covert operations simply for profit, but the arming of pro-Solomani groups helps the Baron's cause by providing the very excuse he needs to convince the Archduke to overtly intervene in the affairs of independent worlds, even funding counter-revolutions against pro-Solomani insurrections. Outworld's Executives are sympathetic to the Baron's cause but currently their only direct contribution to the *Chimera* Group is intelligence, though their practice of flooding the area with weapons to anyone who will buy them indirectly serves *Chimera's* purpose.

*Chimera* is known to the Archduke, his advisors and various intelligence services such as Imperial Navy Intelligence, but the Domain government is too busy dealing with other more pressing matters to do anything about it. A blind eye is also turned towards *Chimera* because of its hardline policy towards Solomani encroachment into the region. However, *Chimera* is involved in more unsavory activities than the Domain Administration currently knows about.

### SCENE 3: THE PROFESSOR (KEY SCENE)

After dinner, the Baron suggests the group come back tomorrow for a special mission briefing. The next day, the group is again escorted by G-Carrier from their quarters or ship to the Baron's apartments. They enter a special briefing room dominated by a large table. The Baron, flanked by the middle-aged, portly, bespectacled Mileous Telmar, invites them to sit. As usual, the Baron is flanked by his two bodyguards, including Janicin. The bespectacled Telmar is an oddity since most people on high-tech worlds use simple eye correction medical procedures to eliminate eye problems. He stands and speaks.

"The Baron has kindly agreed to fund an exploration mission to the independent world of Adikeen. For the last 20 years I have been looking for the remnants of an advanced civilization in the Tri-Empire subsector. Having pieced together ancient legends in the area, I have come to the conclusion the civilization was centered on the waterworld of Adikeen."

Telmar waves his hand in front of a small flat screen in front of him. A 3-dimensional map of the Tri-Empire subsector appears in front of them. Telmar presses buttons of the flat screen as the image magnifies to the Adikeen system, then the Adikeen planet itself, a slowly rotating globe with small islands dotted around the world. "Adikeen has been inhabited since the Twilight of the Rule of Man by humans of Solomani descent, but the Long Night was hard on the new colonists."

The image again magnifies to a view of the low-tech main city of Adikeen viewed from low level. "The world regressed to TL-5, and it has not climbed out of this state for

centuries. But I have visited Adikeen a few times, and the people seem happy enough."

The low-level pass over the city continues over the water. "You will note the very rough seas on this planet. The high sea states are caused not by tidal forces – Adikeen has no moons, but by powerful winds that frequently reach 200kph."

The image reverts back to a view of Adikeen from orbit. A strange shimmering covers much of the water. "Based on geological data I have collected from the planet, I believe the world was once 82% covered in water." The image changes to a computer generated simulation of the sunken continents.

"Some catastrophe sank its continents. There may be something buried under the oceans, but you will notice the large areas of shimmering silver. This is an unusual species of plankton that actually reflects radio as well as light energy, making it difficult to undertake radar mapping of the seabed. Ladar is only partially effective at penetrating this natural wall. We can get around this of course. We could map the seabed with a powerful densitometer system and that is precisely what we intend to do. We wish to retrofit the sensor suite on your scout ship with a 50km range densitometer system. We can then map the entire planet from low orbit."

The 3-D image cuts to a tiny scout ship circumnavigating the planet, showing the area that can be mapped per orbit. Janus rises to his feet. "So gentlemen, will you assist us?"

The mission sounds easy. There seems little danger, they are retained by the Baron anyway so the characters have little choice but to agree. Any scouts in the group will be pleased the scout ship will be upgraded with such a useful and powerful tool – the densitometer, although the Professor will want it back at the end of the mission. Preparations are feverishly made on the characters' scout ship. Having already been brought up to standard by the Imperial Navy, the ship is retrofitted with the densitometer and the 20 ton cargo bay filled with supplies and equipment for the survey. The largest item is an 8 ton crate which can barely be loaded aboard. If enquired about, the Professor advises it is a small, high tech submersible. "You don't expect us to swim to these archeological sites, do you?"

The Professor brings the following equipment aboard:

- 10 Oxygen Tanks
- 10 Sets of Swimming Equipment
- 10 Artificial Gills
- 6 Protective Suits
- 10 Combination Masks
- 20 Underwater Air Tanks
- 10 Medium Range Communicators
- 10 Radiation Counters
- 2 Metal Detectors
- 10 Light Intensifier Goggles
- 2 Medical Kits

The artificial gills will be particularly useful for this adventure. They allow a person to breathe for an unlimited time underwater.

### Referee

Telmar does not have psionic abilities. Sense Motive rolls (CT: Streetwise rolls) and psionic

probes (if any characters have psionics) will reveal that Telmar is a genuine archeologist who has actually been doing what he says he has been doing for the past 20 years. Obviously sponsored by the Baron, the Professor does not suspect any shady dealings by the Baron – indeed the Professor seems oblivious to politics of any kind. His only concern is his research, which he is very passionate about.

## ACT 2: FIRST SURVEY

*The characters travel to Adikeen to conduct the survey.*

### SCENE 1: RUMORS ALONG THE WAY

With *Broadside of a Barn* loaded to the gunnels with equipment and sensors, the ship sets off for Adikeen. With only 4 staterooms, the Professor may have to occupy a stateroom with one of the characters. Telmar is a very tidy and fastidious however, in stark contrast to the battered scout ship he is traveling in. The obvious route to Adikeen is only 4 jumps: Pinkatto to Radii, Radii to Nishlishurkha, then to Keystone and finally Adikeen. The Referee should administer ship encounters normally, although currently there is a considerable amount of ill-feeling in the subsector towards the Imperium, so 1D100 starship reaction rolls should have a negative modifier of -15. Starport authorities will spend extra time searching the ship, since it is an Imperial registered vessel. Questions about their treatment will be met with gruff anecdotes about the Imperium throwing their weight around in the subsector and poking their nose where they aren't welcome. If asked to clarify exactly who is causing the friction, the local officials will usually make vague comments about "the Imperial Navy" or "that new Archduke in Ley Sector". Other rumors, located in the rumor section, can be imparted during this phase of the adventure.

One person encountered along the way will provide some specific information about Imperial activities. This occurs as the characters pass through the Keystone system, a pleasant mid-tech agricultural world in the middle of the subsector. Keystone is in fact an Imperial colony possessing a decent C class downport. The crew will want to obtain fuel and take the opportunity to look around. During their time at the starport the characters are approached by a well dressed tall, obviously pure-bred Vilani woman in her 60s. Introducing herself as Ms Kalee Darugasad, she requests a meeting with the group. Darugasad will reveal she works as the local liaison officer for the Imperial diplomatic service.

"I am required to advise you of the problems Imperial citizens are having in the subsector at the moment. You should be aware of the negative feeling towards us on some planets in the area. The Imperial Navy has been visiting systems, including this one. One Navy ship in particular has apparently been threatening local governments with Imperial annexation if they even accept visits from Solomani ships. I've been trying to find out which ship that was, but the Navy is not willing to divulge ship movements to the likes of myself. Apparently the captain of this particular ship is a sympathizer or secret member of the Loyal Sector Guard. So, be aware of what is going on. Don't let your guard down."

Further questioning from the characters will reveal that a 1000 ton Imperial Navy Destroyer Escort has also been visiting Tri-Empire worlds and upsetting the local governments. The vessel which has been threatening annexation is apparently a fleet destroyer or a light cruiser, so this is a separate set of incidents.

### Referee

This simple encounter seems totally unconnected with their patron Baron Janus. In fact the annexation threats are being undertaken by a *Chimera* operative, the captain of the 5000 ton *Saberwolf* class Fleet Destroyer *Manifest Destiny*, a ship in the Ley Sector Colonial Fleet. The captain is also a secret member of the Loyal Sector Guard (LSG), which casts new light on *Chimera*. Is *Chimera* formally linked to the LSG? Further scenes will make this connection clear.

There is plenty of time for the characters to question Telmar about what he knows about Adikeen and the Baron. He seems naïve about the Baron, and simply appears grateful that the Baron is taking such an interest in the Professor's work on Adikeen. Telmar elaborates on his theories. Uploading a simulation program on the ship's computer, he shows a 3-D perspective of Adikeen. "I got this from the Scout Service database. I shouldn't have it, but the Baron has connections. You will note as we zoom in on the animation that Adikeen is not spherical. It does have the usual ovoid shape due to gravity bulging the equatorial area and flattening the poles, but look at this."

The image reveals one large area of the planet is "flatter" than the rest. "Something flattened this massive area. I suspect it may have been collision with a moon, or possibly a massive explosion from the star which scarred that area of the planet. The source of the catastrophe is most probably natural, but you never know what technology the civilization may have had. It could have been an anti-matter explosion. The local civilization may have sown the seeds of its own demise."

### SCENE 2: ADIKEEN FIRST SURVEY (KEY SCENE)

*Broadside of a Barn* will eventually arrive in the Adikeen system. There is no starship traffic other than a 1000 ton freighter run on its regular run back to the Imperium loaded with Adikeen's primary export – its silver plankton that are used by pharmaceutical corporations to make drugs. A solitary radio beacon at the starport guides the scout ship to a landing on the largest island of the waterworld. The journey through the atmosphere is very rough as high winds buffet the ship. Finally the scout ship lands, and the group is greeted by a local delegation. Everyone bows to the characters, a most unusual thing to do. An elderly man, flanked by four guards armed with swords, greets the Professor. "Welcome Professor Telmar. Please, we extend all our hospitality to you and your friends. You are all employed by Baron Janus are you not?" Telmar whispers to the characters: "This is Tiamad, Adikeen's elected President. He always greets offworlders personally. I don't know why. Maybe it's because visitors are such a novelty to them."

The characters are led to a nearby hotel, a beautiful building. The group is treated like royalty, their every whim catered for. This is quite opposite to the behavior warned of by Darugasad on Keystone. The truth is that not catering for the needs of employees of the Baron would result in certain death for Tiamad. He and his council are unable to fight back effectively against the technological might of an Imperial representative.

After spending the night listening to the constant winds outside their hotel rooms, the group starts on their task in earnest the next morning. Telmar has modified the scout ship's sensors with the densitometer and mapped a flight plan, which is to orbit at about 40km in regular sweeps over the vast seas of Adikeen, creating a 3-D map of the sea floor. However, even at that height jetstream winds are a constant problem. Each day the scout ship is flown, a DC 20 Pilot check (CT: 9+ modified by pilot skill) needs to be made to ensure the pilot does not lose control of the scout ship. If the pilot loses control, he/she

must make another DC 25 check (CT: 10+ modified by Pilot skill) to regain control of the ship. If the pilot fails to regain control, the ship takes 1D6 damage from the buffeting, and plummets 5km. Another DC 25 Pilot check must be made in order to regain control. Failure to do so again means another 1D6 damage and further reduction in altitude until the pilot either regains control or the scout ship makes an embarrassing plunge into the ocean. The ocean plunge will probably not be fatal – just very inconvenient and likely to cause all manner of minor damage throughout the ship. The winds are a natural hazard of Adikeen. Nothing can be done to mitigate their effects.

### Referee

A sense motive (CT: Streetwise) or psionic probe will reveal something disturbing in Tiamad – he is gripped by fear, but does not outwardly show it. He is however, willing to do almost anything to make the group comfortable. Likewise, the locals will be very respectful towards the characters, but will not engage in any type of conversation. Sense Motive (CT: Streetwise) checks or psionics will show they too, feel a certain fear around the characters and Telmar, yet the characters have (probably) not done anything to justify that fear. Any questions directed to the locals about their attitude are met with silent stares or evasions but no useful answers.

### SCENE 3: THE SEA-WALL (KEY SCENE)

After the planetary survey begins all the crew can do is pilot the ship as best they can, and help Telmar with his data analysis. About two weeks into the survey the characters are relaxing in the bar at the hotel after another long day on the job when Telmar bursts into the bar clutching a handful of printouts. “Look! Look at this!” He stabs his finger on a printout, which shows one of the many 3-D maps of the sea floor. It is obvious even to the untrained eye that Telmar has found something. A perfectly straight “tube”, like a sea wall can be seen on the map, and it stretches over 200km. “This is an artificial construction. It’s completely straight. I’m sure of it... we’ve found what we’ve been looking for. It’s time to go down and have a look.” The sea wall itself is about 200km north of the main island, so the submersible has to be transported there. Tiamad offers to assist the group with use of a small TL-5 exploration ship, the *Adikeen Adventurer*. The scout ship lands on a pier at the seaport and offloads the submersible, which is then loaded aboard the deck of the *Adikeen Adventurer* and strapped down. The characters and Telmar are offered passage aboard the ship, although the scout ship can also fly with the ship to provide backup. Tiamad also insists on going with the *Adikeen Adventurer*, although why a planetary ruler would want to be wasting his time going on such a voyage is lost on the characters.

The submersible only holds four people including the pilot, so depending on the group’s size not all characters may be able to go down. The remaining characters should stay aboard the ship or scout/courier. In any case, they will be in constant touch with the submersible by radio. The ship sets sail and about 15 hours later, dawn the next day, arrives at the spot indicated on Telmar’s map. All around the ship the silver plankton shimmers in the morning sun. The submersible is unstrapped and prepared for its first voyage. A crane gently lowers the little sub into the water and three characters plus Telmar clamber into the cramped crew compartment. Hatches are closed, and the sub slowly descends into the murky depths. Telmar pilots the vehicle, although any character with vessel/watercraft/small boat feat can pilot it. One character should monitor the numerous sensors and another control the communications. The submersible is packed with advanced sensor

equipment so piloting the murky depths with sonar and light intensification equipment is relatively simple. Simple, that is, until the tiny vehicle enters depths where little light penetrates from the surface. At this point, the lights have to be turned on and progress can be very slow. The sea floor is at 150m, so after a quick dive to the bottom powerful lights illuminate the floor as the sub glides around in a grid search pattern. After a couple of hours the sonar system picks up a large “tube” in the seabed, about 16m in diameter and running off the scopes in both directions. The sub glides towards the object, taking photographs and video as it goes. Ahead looms the tube, not really a sea wall at all, but it is clearly artificial, and very large. Densitometer readings indicate it is hollow! It is covered in sealife and underwater plants, but it is clearly what Telmar has been looking for. “Look at that gentlemen. I was right. I was right! What have we got here...”

His missive of self-congratulation is interrupted by a sudden bang from the rear of the sub. Water starts spraying into the compartment. There appears to be a leak. Telmar suggests they should ascend as fast as possible. Any character with mechanical skill can try to plug the leak with whatever means are available. A DC 15 T/Mechanical check is required to plug the leak (CT: 10+ modified by mechanical skill), otherwise the leak gets worse. There is enough time to get to the surface before the sub would sink, but the characters are not to know this, and it is a close run thing. Of course, the characters may fix the leak immediately and get on with things, but it shows that the sub may have to be given a proper shakedown voyage to resolve any problems. Tiamad greets the crew as they surface, the ship trailing the location of the sub very closely. After hearing about the problems with the sub he suggests calling in one of the Adikeen Navy’s submarines to provide backup. “They might seem crude to you, but I assure you they are robust and well proven.” If the characters refuse the offer, Tiamad will not insist, but he does call in a submarine anyway, placing it on standby ‘performing instrument calibration operations’ in case it is needed. The characters can then choose to travel with Telmar or the local submarine, which has considerably more room.

### Referee

There will no doubt be discussion on what to do next with the find. If the characters insist on trying to cut their way into the tube to see what is inside, they can go back down and attempt it. They can either use a cutting torch on the end of the sub’s robot arm, or use artificial gills and try to blast their way in. Either way, they will fail. Anyone using an artificial gill will find the water temperature, even with proper swimsuits, to be so cold they can only last 10 minutes outside the sub before having to make a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw to avoid taking Stamina damage. There clearly has to be a better way.

In the meantime, in less than 8 hours, a submarine of the Adikeen Navy, The *Dekar Sunrise*, has arrived. Ten times larger than Telmar’s little submersible, it is an impressive sight. Or it could be a deathtrap. It is, after all, an internal combustion-powered TL-5 submarine...

### The Adikeen Adventurer

The statistics for the *Adikeen Adventurer* are presented below. This Government research ship (which is actually run by the Adikeen Navy) carries an experimental TL-6 sonar device and various pieces of useful equipment. The ship can carry 35 metric tons of cargo internally, plus other items can be lashed to the deck. It carries a token armament of 2 pintle mounted LMGs with gunshields, one located forward of the bridge and one aft.

The ship has a reasonable range – over 10,000km, enough fuel for 2 weeks cruising at maximum speed, and 4 weeks at cruising speed. Various refueling points dot the islands of Adikeen to enable the ship make refueling stops on very long missions. The *Adikeen Adventurer* also carries a lab and a sickbay, although the TL-5 equipment is rather primitive. The nominal crew is 10 – Master, two Pilots, Navigator, Chief Engineer and 5 ratings who undertake various duties as deckhands and assist in engineering. A handful of these vessels are in service. The locker contains various items one would normally expect for a ship, medical kits, lifejackets, flares, mechanical kits and also some weapons: 10 SMGs with ample ammunition. Each crew member carries an autopistol as a sidearm.

*The statistics for this vessel are presented at the end of this book under Starships and Watercraft.*

### **Telmar's Submersible**

Telmar's submersible has the following characteristics. It is a high tech machine but is untested and very cramped. It will however be very useful for the mission assigned to it. A TL-8 fusion powerplant powers the little vehicle. It is packed with sensors and communications equipment – a robot arm, powerful lights, sonar unit, densitometer, low-light video (light intensification), 2 way radio with 500km range, neutrino sensor, auditory sensor, Maser communications system and a TL-11 synaptic Model A7 computer with dynamic interface. It is also quite fast underwater, making full use of the small fusion unit which provides prodigious energy output. The submersible has an airlock capable of holding 3 people, and has 987.35vl of cargo space for underwater swimming gear and other items. The heavily reinforced armored hull is rated AR-8 and enables the craft to dive to 1600m without problems. Crush depth is 2000m.

*The statistics for this vessel are presented at the end of this book under Starships and Watercraft.*

## **SCENE 4: FELLOW SUBMARINERS**

### **The Dekar Sunrise**

*Dekar Sunrise* is a very low-tech submarine. It is a complete unknown to the characters, although a welcome addition to the mission. It has more room for the crew than Telmar's sub. It is also armed with two torpedo tubes and carries 30 primitive 50kg torpedoes. The torpedoes have the following characteristics: 80kph maximum speed; radio guidance; Agility-1; 1 EP crude battery giving a range of 5 minutes at maximum speed (6.6km maximum range); The 10kg HEAP warhead is capable of 8D6 damage against vehicles.

The foredeck contains a pintle mounted LMG with a shield. The sub is also fitted with a primitive TL-6 sonar device. A large 500vl airlock allows connection to smaller submersibles, even underwater. The reinforced hull allows the submarine to dive to a depth of 250m. Crush depth is 300m. Crew is normally 14, 6 officers (Captain, Executive Officer, Navigator, 2 Pilots and Chief Engineer) and 8 ratings. Ratings usually double-bunk and two passengers can be carried. The submarine has two postage stamp-sized galleys and an equally tiny sickbay.

*The statistics for this vessel are presented at the end of this book under Starships and Watercraft.*

The submarine contains the following equipment in its storage locker:

- 10 Oxygen Tanks
- 5 Sets of Swimming Equipment
- 15 Sets of Cold Weather Clothing
- 10 Protective Suits
- 10 Combination Masks
- 30 Underwater Air Tanks
- 2 Medium Range Communicators
- 1 Radiation Counter
- 20 Electric Torches
- 2 Medical Kits
- 1 Mechanical Tool Set
- 5 Binoculars
- 10 Autopistols
- 10 SMG's
- 5 Daggers

With the submersible safely back on the deck of the *Adikeen Adventurer*, the ship and the *Dekar Sunrise* set off along the tube to see where it will lead. Sonar soundings from the ship indicate the sea floor depth to vary only marginally between 150 and 200m. It is obvious the team is traveling over a sunken plain. In the meantime the characters are invited aboard the *Dekar Sunrise*. They arrive onboard to be greeted by Captain Lothar Braylen, a wizened old sea dog with no manners and, seemingly, even less charisma. His crew seem exceptionally loyal to him however, as the captain gives the characters a tour of the submarine – a typical cramped, dirty, smelly, creaking, bellowing example of a low-tech submarine. Enquiries to the crew about Braylen will reveal his true character. The crew, with the sole exception of the Executive Officer who is reticent about voicing his opinions, consider Braylen the best captain they have ever served under, most saying they would follow him through any situation.

Making about 15kmh along the route, the *Adikeen Adventurer* finds the going tougher as rain squalls sweep over the ship and the waves start crashing over the bow. Even the hardened crew succumb to sea-sickness, the stench permeating through the crew area. The *Dekar Sunrise* dives to avoid the bad weather. The weather starts to get rougher and the winds rise. If the scout/courier is traveling with the ship it is forced to fly to the safety of land.

The winds increase to the point where the ship can no longer make headway against the mountainous waves. Anything not tied down gets thrown around the ship. At this point, the characters must roll 1D6 to determine the effects of this storm:

- 1 The ship does not make headway, but neither does it sustain any lasting damage. Adikeen industry builds its ships tough.
- 2 The ship suffers 1D6 points of structural damage.
- 3 The ship suffers 2D6 points of structural damage.
- 4 The ship suffers 3D6 points of structural damage. Characters and crew each suffer 1D6 points of damage from being thrown against bulkheads, hit by flying furniture etc. The ship takes on some water but the ship holds together.
- 5 The ship suffers 4D6 points of structural damage. Characters and crew each suffer 1D8 points of damage from being thrown against bulkheads, hit by flying furniture etc. The



engines fail and the ship starts drifting as well as taking on water. The storm blows itself out before further damage can be done however. The ship must return to port for repairs.

6 The ship suffers 5D6 points of structural damage. Characters and crew each suffer 1D10 points of damage from being thrown against bulkheads, hit by flying furniture and various other serious incidents onboard. The engines fail and the ship starts drifting. The submersible breaks from its deck mooring and falls overboard. It can be retrieved however, but it takes 2D6 points of structural damage. The ship starts to take on water and is listing badly. The referee should determine, based on the actions of the characters, whether the ship can be saved from going under. Lifeboats are available and they are sturdy, but it will be 2D6 hours before the storm has abated enough to allow other ships, the *Dekar Sunrise* or the scout/courier to pick up survivors. The scout/courier can easily fix the location of the submersible, although some equipment may be smashed on the tiny sub and need repair.

### Referee

While any result will not put an end to the expedition, the sinking of the *Adikeen Adventurer* will be a highly inconvenient blow to the mission and delay the next phase. The *Dekar Sunrise* is quite capable of carrying on the mission however, with Telmar's submersible able to dock with it. The effects of even the worst storm do not reach down more than a few dozen meters, which is why submarines are favored for transport on Adikeen.

### SCENE 5: JULES VERNE HAD IT EASY (KEY SCENE)

After the storm blows out, the ship (or if it has sunk, the *Dekar Sunrise*), will continue the mission. Tiamad will survive the sinking, and will return to shore regardless of whether the ship sunk or not. If the Adikeen submarine is carrying the characters, it will also be carrying the submersible attached to its primary airlock. Telmar suggests the characters fit a portable high-tech sonar unit and other sensors to augment the sub's poor sensor systems. These are duly retrofitted, much to the disgust of Captain Braylen.

After following the tube for three more days, it seems astounding that the tube should be so long, and so perfectly straight. The tube now extends for over 1000km, but sonar soundings show the sea floor has suddenly dropped into a deep trench and the tube suddenly ends. Is this the end of their journey? The trench floor is rather deep – 2000m, and the submersible can only dive to 1600m. Telmar nevertheless determines it is time to dive and see what they can find. The submersible is released from the airlock or lowered from the deck of the ship, and sinks beneath the waves, making its way to 200m. Powerful lights reveal that the tube has been sheared off, and inside the tube there is a huge closed pressure door that prevented the entire tube from flooding. The *Dekar Sunrise* accompanies the submersible.

Moving out over the trench, sonar soundings indicate the trench depth at 2km. But they also show something else, very large (about 60,000kg) and ascending very quickly. Out of the black depths comes a gigantic serpent-like creature which attacks the small submersible with its large tooth-bristling mouth. The submersible takes damage as it is tossed around by the creature. Over the intercom comes a desperate voice from the *Dekar Sunrise*. "We're being attacked! Battlestations!" A quick look on sonar shows two creatures, one attacking each submarine. The only defense the submersible has is a blowtorch attached to the robot arm, and its powerful lights.

On the *Dekar Sunrise* it is highly probable some of the characters are onboard

operating the high tech sonar and other sensor equipment. Captain Braylen bellows out orders as the lights dim to red alert mode. Chaos ensues throughout the sub as the crew run frantically to their stations. The sub is battered by another attack run from their invisible foe. "Open the pumps! Up 20 degrees! Flood torpedo tubes!" barks Braylen. He turns to his sonar operator. "Where is it?" The sonar operator just shrugs his shoulders, taking off his headphones in despair. Braylen turns to the characters. "Well? Can your new-fangled technology give us some eyes? It's probably a Pelesar – a very nasty creature." Telmar's sensor equipment is operating perfectly – it detects a 60,000kg object moving at up to 60kmh and making very tight turns. It is turning to starboard, about 20 degrees below the submarine. The Captain thinks aloud. "At least we can track the thing. How's your little sub doing? Is Telmar still online?" A quick check over the radio shows Telmar's ship is proving a tough meal for the other creature – its armored hull is holding, but there is a new problem – the creature is taking Telmar's sub deeper into the trench. "Damn!" screams Braylen. "Do we have a firing solution on these things?" The firing officer answers. "No sir! The creatures are moving too fast!"

If the characters haven't already thought of strategies, Telmar offers two over the radio. "Captain Braylen. I'm going to try to blind the creature holding us. And I suggest firing your torpedoes and attempting to stun them with the blast wave." The submersible is now at 700m and being dragged deeper. Two or three characters will probably be with Telmar, fighting for their lives. Telmar suggests diverting all power to the lights. "We have to wait until there is complete darkness – that will be at about 1000m before we blind the creature. We will only have one chance at it." The characters may suggest using the robot arm and the torch, but it is entangled in the creature's mouth and cannot be moved.

Meanwhile at 200m the *Dekar Sunrise* tries to line up the other creature and fires two torpedoes rigged with proximity fuses. One fizzles helplessly past the creature. The firing officer shouts out, "The creature is heading towards us! The fuse will detonate too close!" The other torpedo explodes within 40m of the creature and only 200m from the submarine. A massive blast wave hits and stuns the creature, its body plummeting down into the trench. The submarine is less lucky. "Brace yourselves!" bellows the captain as a shockwave hits the submarine, knocking out its electrical power and blowing leaks throughout the submarine. Each crew member receives 1D8 damage from the impact. The submarine itself takes 4D6 points of structural damage. Crew members run around like madmen, attempting to repair the leaks as water streams into the crew quarters. Emergency lights come on as the submarine sinks to the sea floor, all too near to the bottomless trench. Braylen wipes his brow. "Well, at least we're still in one piece."

The sub is almost at crush depth however, lying at 280m, and most of her pumps are without power. Unless the engines can be restarted, the vessel cannot surface. The characters should use their skills or equipment to facilitate repairs on the submarine. They can get the low-tech engines going again on a successful DC 20 T/mechanical check (CT: 11+ modified by mechanical skill). The leaks are another matter. In one compartment (the mess) the crew are forced to shut the section off completely. All the high tech gear in known space is of little use in this situation. The scout/courier, if it is operating above the surface, can only dive to a depth of about 20m. The only thing the scout/courier could do is attach a towline to drag the submarine to the surface, although it would be an agonizingly slow and dangerous process.

Over half a kilometer deeper in the trench, the submersible reaches 1000m. "Cover your eyes." Telmar reaches for the light switch and a blazing light emanates from

submersible. The creature loosens its grip, retreating into darkness. The submersible turns around, shooting towards the light, climbing out of the trench. Telmar smiles. “At least we know our little vessel is good to 1000 meters.” It is, as usual coming from Telmar, a dramatic understatement.

The submersible quickly climbs out of the trench and attaches to the airlock of the *Dekar Sunrise*. Eventually the *Dekar Sunrise* limps to the surface, its engines restored. Repairs will be needed to both submarines. The *Adikeen Adventurer*, if it did not sink in the storm, will be able to provide temporary repairs for both subs. If the ship was sunk in the storm, both subs may need to return to the seaport for repairs, further delaying the exploration.

#### **Referee**

While ashore (if the *Adikeen Adventurer* has been sunk) the characters may encounter rumors from the rumors table. These should be administered by the Referee as the situation dictates.

### **ACT 3: DISCOVERY**

*The characters find an undersea pyramid – a remnant of a long-lost civilization.*

#### **SCENE 1: A PHAROH'S DISCOVERY (KEY SCENE)**

After the encounter with the Pelesars, the ship and/or the submarines continue their long journey. On the other side of the trench the tube continues another 400km. About 10 hours after restarting their journey, if the *Adikeen Adventurer* has been sunk, another ship more or less identical to the old ship arrives to join the submarines, making its presence known via radio. This new ship is called the *Dimar*. The Adikeen government seems intent on helping the characters as best they can. After following the tube for that distance, sonar readings reveal something unusual at 220m on the seafloor. It is a pyramid. And radiating from the pyramid are four more tubes, the same diameter as the one they were following. The pyramid is a hub of some kind. Both submarines dive to the base of the pyramid and, using lights and other sensors, take a look.

The pyramid is covered in sea life, but it is readily identifiable as an artificial structure. It is 200m square and 100m high. There appears to be no way in. Densitometer readings indicate the pyramid to be hollow, and a 3-D image-map of the interior gives an outline of the spaces inside. The neutrino sensor indicates no radiation inside the structure. On the south side of the pyramid is what appears to be two large airlocks, easily capable of taking the submersible. The slightly raised door indicates the position of the doors. The question is how to get in.

#### **Referee**

Belligerent characters may wish to use torpedoes to try to blast the door in, but the door is immune to weapon blasts of any kind. The actual composition of the pyramid's skin is of unknown origin, but appears to be some form of bonded superdense armor. Someone notices a small panel next to each airlock door. It contains a hand outline, and the logical conclusion is that laying one's hand on the imprint will open it. Obviously this is an impractical underwater interface, which means that at some stage in the past the pyramid (and the airlock) was above water.

A character must swim out to the panel and lay their hand on it. If this is done, the

airlock simply opens. Lights automatically come on as the submersible slowly glides into the large airlock. It is truly astounding that there should be power available in the structure as it is clearly thousands of years old. The door closes behind and the characters find themselves in a 32m long x 16m wide and high airlock. Several large doors lead off the chamber. Since the pyramid was obviously not designed for underwater use, there is no way to pump the water out of the airlock once the outer airlock door has opened. Densitometer readings indicate various other rooms and corridors leading from the chamber they are in, but these corridors are not filled with water. If the characters do not work it out, Telmar suggests the way to get into these other rooms without flooding the entire pyramid, and that is simply to use the extendable airlock on the submersible and form a seal with one of the airlock doors that lead off from the chamber they are currently in.

That done, the characters and Telmar move into the submersible's airlock and are faced with another hand-operated door. They open the door into the inner part of the pyramid. As the characters move along the corridors and into the rooms of the pyramid, they will see items that are familiar but disturbingly different. There are meeting areas, computer consoles, and areas that appear to be bars and restaurants. There is no sign of life anywhere – but the air is breathable. As the characters move into each area, the lights come on automatically, activated by motion. Characters with computer skill may attempt to make sense of the computer consoles. A DC-30 roll modified by computer skill (CT 12+ modified by 1/2 computer skill round down) will enable the character to turn on the computer's interface. There is no keyboard – rather the interface holographic and graphic elements are moved around in the air by virtually grabbing the holographic icons and manipulating them. But the language symbols on the interface – as well as signs on the walls – are utterly incomprehensible.

The characters may wish to collect items from the pyramid, but there is little of value to pick up. Furniture is corroded beyond any use and any organic matter has broken down long ago.

#### **SCENE 2: ALL ABOARD! (KEY SCENE)**

In the center of the pyramid is a large area with a high ceiling and some strange-looking craft docked along platforms in what appears to be a grav-train station. The area lights up as the characters enter the chamber. There are 3 “trains” parked at various platforms. Rails are mounted on the floor of the chamber, obviously tracks for the trains. But a quick check of the mysterious vehicles shows that they are actually off the ground – they are levitating, which means they still have power, or they are deriving power from the tracks. A quick check by characters with T/Engineering or T/Electronics skill proves that the tracks provide power to the trains. If the characters or Telmar decide to approach any of the trains, getting within 2m of a train will open the passenger doors. The interior lights up, revealing comfortable seating which shows little sign of aging. There also appears to be a cockpit at each end of the train.

If the characters enter the train, the doors will close behind them – once all outside are inside the train, and the vehicle will start down the tracks, gathering speed as it goes. Depending on which grav-train they enter, they may be taken on a journey north, south, east or west. There seems to be no way to stop the train as it careers through the tube on its way to an unknown destination. The characters' communicators still work, so they can call for help. The only vessel fast enough to catch the train as it speeds through the

underwater tube is the scout ship – assuming it is in the area. Inertial locators reveal that the train is now approaching 2000kph. Time is of the essence. Telmar or one of the characters sees a computer screen on one of the walls, showing the train's position relative to the planet's tube system. The problem is the train is heading towards a section of tubing that is flashing red – part of the tube system that is damaged and has been sealed off with emergency doors. A quick radio check with the scout ship reveals the tube to be severed. Telmar calculates they have only 5 minutes before the train slams straight into the emergency door at over 2000kph – surely a devastating end to their lives. Of course, safety systems built into the train may automatically stop it before the crash... but who wants to find out whether they work?

The doors to either of the cockpits are closed, and they do not have the “standard” hand-imprint device to open them. They do, however, seem to be rather flimsy, so it may be worth a try to blast it open with weapons fire. If the characters line up their weaponry and blaze away at the door, they achieve little at first but eventually cracks appear in the door and the characters will be able to batter it down and get into the cockpit. It will take a couple of minutes to breach the door and another 30 seconds to enter the cockpit. Other methods of forcing or breaching the door take a similar amount of time.

Anyone entering the cockpit will be faced with incomprehensible computer controls. T/ Computer skill will not be sufficient to decipher the controls in time, but any character with Use Alien Devices skill may make a DC20 check to make some sense of the controls. Trying to make sense of the controls takes about 60 seconds, at which point Telmar looks up at a computer monitor in the cockpit. “We have 90 seconds until we hit the end of the tube!”

If the scout ship is in position trailing the train (this is highly unlikely as the scout ship will still be racing towards its position) the ship can use a missile to try to blow up the tube, fill it with water and slow down the train as it hits a wall of water. Unfortunately, this course of action will fail. The tube is built of material designed with withstand laser or missile attack.

There are only two options left, assuming the Use Alien Devices check is unsuccessful. The characters could throw themselves from the rear of the train or destroy the computer controls. If anyone has a grav-belt they will be able to save themselves and one other person holding onto the grav-belt wearer by exiting the rear of the train. Anyone hurling themselves off the train without a grav-belt will result become an impressive smear on the tracks.

The other option is to destroy the controls with gunfire, grenades, explosives, blunt instruments – anything that will cause damage to electronic circuits. After 30 seconds of gunfire or other vigorous assault, the lights die in the train, emergency lighting comes on, and most importantly the train starts to slow at a high rate. If the characters engaged in violence against the controls as soon as they entered the cockpit instead of attempting to decipher the controls, they will have 2 minutes, otherwise they will only have 1 minute before hitting the emergency door. Either way, the train crashes onto the floor of the tube, throwing the characters around as sparks fly and it drops below supersonic speed. Each character takes 1d6 Stamina damage. The train slows, but not enough to stop it completely before it careers into the emergency door.

If the characters wasted time trying to stop the train by deciphering the controls (and did not succeed), the train will impact the airlock at 250kph, causing each character 3d10 Lifeblood damage (CT: 4D6). If the characters blasted the controls apart, the train will

impact the airlock at 100kph, causing each character 3d6 Lifeblood damage (CT: 2D6). Either speed of impact could be enough to seriously injure the characters. The characters may wish to try to leap off the train just before impact: a successful DC 30 Jump or Tumble check will result in only 1D6 damage. Failing the roll will result is 3d10 Lifeblood damage (CT: 4D6).

Either way this is one train trip the characters will never forget.

### Referee

Time is of the essence in this scene. Every second should be recorded. Once they determine the tube is blocked off, the characters only have 5 minutes to save themselves – no more.

They have only been on the train for only 10 minutes and have traveled 300 km from the pyramid. It will be a long walk back, especially if some characters are injured. Using communicators it is easy to call for help, but the only way to get out is to walk out. There are service hatches along the tube however. After the characters walk, or limp about 20km, they come across a service hatch. It is operated by the laying of a hand on the panel next to the hatch, just like the other hatches found so far. The problem is that opening the hatch would result in the tube being flooded with seawater – the hatch is not an airlock. The characters have to wait until one of the submarines arrive to create a secure connection to the airlock. The characters will climb through the hatch onto a submarine bruised and battered, but secure in the knowledge that they won't be taking a train trip again.

Obviously some of the safety protocols on the grav-train network are no longer operational.

### SCENE 3: LOW BERTHS (KEY SCENE)

The characters and Telmar finally get back to the pyramid and continue exploring. They are joined by four of the crew of the *Dekar Sunrise* including the captain, who is fascinated by the discovery. It is advisable to keep the *Dekar Sunrise* team with the characters – just in case they touch something they shouldn't. In the north-east corner of the pyramid the group comes across a door that leads to an airlock – large enough to take 10 humans. The controls seem simple enough – any character with computer skill will be able to work them out. Densitometer readings from the submersible show a chamber attached to the airlock that has an atmosphere. The airlock door is opened and the characters step into a dimmed chamber filled with vertical glass human-sized 8 foot tall vessels. There are 20 of them, and are readily identifiable as low berths. Braylen and the other crew cautiously approach one of the vessels. “What in the name of Adikeen are these?” exclaims Braylen. The characters may wish to describe putting a human into cold sleep, but it is of little consequence. Braylen approaches a vessel and wipes the condensation off the glass. A tall humanoid skeleton stares back at Braylen, who is taken aback. A control panel in the center of the room appears to be easily decipherable. A DC 20 T/Computer check (CT: 9+ modified by computer skill) will enable the characters to open the low berths. As they open, large 7-8 foot tall skeletons are exposed. There may have been a malfunction with the low berth system which caused their deaths. They should have survived in cold sleep, even for thousands of years.

Another door leads further north to another chamber. Operated simply by a hand imprint, the characters can cautiously investigate the next room. As they enter, lights come on, and various very high tech computer systems hum into life. The place is a control room

of some kind. A large central table flickers into life and a 3-dimensional hologram of a tall, middle aged, obviously human woman appears. She is dressed in long robes. The Dekar Sunrise crew stare in fascination at the holographic figure. The woman starts speaking in a language unintelligible to anyone. It is unlike any of the languages of the Imperium. Telmar interrupts. "This is a message! From the past! To anyone who discovers their final resting place."

As the group stands around the woman, they note her distressed and worried look. Her image disappears and while she is still speaking, a holographic simulation of Adikeen appears, except the world is only 80% covered in water. Adikeen recedes into the distance as the K6 V star appears. The image changes to a view of the orbits of planets around the star. Two of the innermost planets, barren rockballs, seem to collide for some reason and a large fragment of one is sent hurtling on a collision course towards Adikeen. Images of strange spacecraft race towards the approaching planet, attempting to deflect its course with unknown types of weaponry. They obviously fail. The image fades, and are replaced by images of a large fleet of spacecraft leaving Adikeen orbit, obviously a desperate gamble for survival by the civilization.

The image of Adikeen zooms out firstly to the star system, then the subsector, and finally the Glimmerdrift Reaches. A course for the departing fleet is plotted on the star map, leading deep into the Crucis Margin Sector. This may have been the route of the fleet. The image fades to a computer simulation of the rogue rockball approaching Adikeen and smashing into it. The camera view races through the atmosphere as a massive tidal wave a mile high sweeps across the mountains and plains of old Adikeen, and massive earthquakes flatten vast areas of the planet, sinking entire continents. It is amazing anything survived, but the pyramid and its tube system have lasted for thousands of years so they obviously built things to last.

It is unclear whether the disaster had already occurred when the recording was made or whether it was still coming. But what is certain is that the message explains in detail how the old Adikeen civilization was destroyed. The holographic image fades as does the woman's commentary. Telmar has found his holy grail. He sets to work to decipher the computer system and start retrieving data.

## **ACT 4: DON'T UPSET THE NATIVES**

*The characters are attacked by local "rebels" who seem to intensely dislike Imperial citizens.*

### **SCENE 1: LOCAL RESISTANCE (KEY SCENE)**

While the characters are investigating the control room and all its secrets, their visit is stopped short. They receive a frantic distress message from topside – the ship (either the *Adikeen Adventurer* or the *Dimar*) is under attack from another ship. Braylen and his crew rush out of the control room and race for the submersible, sitting in the pyramid's airlock. The problem is the submersible can only hold 4 people but at a pinch can squeeze 8 if the cargo hold and internal airlock is used for temporary passenger space. Telmar and one of Braylen's ratings offer to stay behind. The submersible makes its way out of the airlock and races towards the *Dekar Sunrise*, even as the distress calls from the ship topside become more frantic. "*Dekar Sunrise!* We've been hit by gunfire! We are listing badly! Abandon ship!"

The characters and Braylen race for the bridge of the *Dekar Sunrise* after docking,

Braylen shouting orders. The sonar rating turns to the captain. "Sir! I have debris on the scopes! It's the ship. It's sinking." Braylen orders the submarine half forward, 10kph. The sonar reveals the battered ship sinking to the stern of the submarine, a thump being heard as the ship's hull hits the bottom.

Braylen explains to the characters who he thinks the attackers are. "Sea Pirates. They have been operating for the last decade from the south pole. They have an agenda – the elimination of all Imperial activity or visits to Adikeen. They discover Imperial presence and they attack it. And they don't mind taking the locals down with the Imperials." If asked why the characters were not informed of this threat earlier, Braylen just shrugs. "I don't know. We don't see the pirates often up in the central latitudes. Perhaps our government didn't want to alarm you." The sonar operator interrupts. "Sir, they have sonar as well. I can hear their sweeps." Braylen looks down for a moment. "Silent running. Alert the crew. Slow to 3kph."

The characters still have sensor equipment on the submersible as well as the portable high-tech set on the bridge - their sonar equipment is much more sensitive than the sonar on the *Dekar Sunrise*, so the characters could be of great assistance in assisting to determine the hostile ship's position.

### **Referee**

The pirates are in fact a major political embarrassment to the Adikeen government. Their anti-Imperial attitude has hardened since Baron Janus appeared on Adikeen four years ago and started throwing his weight around; not that the characters know anything about this at the present time. The characters are faced with a more immediate problem however – the pirate vessel on the surface, looking for the submarine. If however, the characters have the scout/courier in range or with the ship, the pirate ship will be attacked by lasers or missiles from the *Broadside of a Barn*, and sink rapidly to the bottom of the ocean. If this happens, *Scene 2, Silent Running* will not play out.

The pirate ship is obviously a rip-off design of the *Adikeen Adventurer*, although it also carries a significant armament for its size, including deck guns and depth charges. TL-6 sonar is fitted which gives the ship a significant anti-submarine capability. This retrofitting of TL-6 equipment is a recent development. The Adikeen government estimates there are at least 8 pirate ships of various sizes operating on the high seas. The 22 crew are primarily ratings, but the crew is large enough to enable carriage of a boarding party who can also act as a prize crew if vessels are taken intact. There are two 1000v turrets, one fore, one aft as well as well as depth charges which are simply rolled off the stern from a rail.

*The statistics for this vessel are presented at the end of this book under Starships and Watercraft.*

### **SCENE 2: SILENT RUNNING**

The submarine crawls along at 3kph, rigged for silent running. The characters relay positioning information to the captain from the sonar sets. Depending on whether the group has anyone is back at the starport with the scout/courier, the characters may call for reinforcements in the form of their scout ship and its armament. It will take about an hour to reach their position however, even at maximum atmospheric speed. Braylen talks to his weapons officer. "Flood both tubes. Load two torpedoes. Bring us up to 50m."

On the submarine a thump is heard, then the submarine rocks. Another thump, larger

and closer is heard, followed by another shockwave hitting the submarine as it slowly ascends. The pirate ship is dropping depth charges. The closest depth charge knocks the crew to the floor and both submarines will take 1D6 damage. Braylen and the characters are faced with several choices at this stage:

- Go up to periscope depth and attempt to blast the pirate ship out of the water with torpedoes. If this course of action is taken the submarine will be able to make it to periscope depth but once the torpedoes are fired the pirate ship will engage the submarine with its deck guns. The pirate ship will only be able to have one round of firing from its deck guns before the submarine conducts an emergency dive. Hopefully the torpedoes hit their target. In CT, roll 8+ for each torpedo to hit. Damage for each torpedo in CT can be determined by rolling 1D6 on the following table.

1. Weapons Hit – deck weapons are destroyed. Ship slows to a maximum of 2D6kph due to hull damage.
2. 1D6 crew are killed. Ship slows to a maximum of 2D6kph due to hull damage.
3. Bridge/Steering Hit – Bridge destroyed along with engine controls. All crew on the bridge are killed. Ship has power but no rudder and cannot be steered.
4. Powerplant hit – ship dead in the water and taking on water. 2D6 crew are killed. Will sink in 1D6 hours.
5. Drive Train hit – ship dead in the water and taking on water. 2D6 crew are killed. Will sink in 1D6 hours.
6. Critical hit – magazine or fuel hit – ship explodes, sinking in 1D6 minutes. 3D6 crew are killed.

T20 vehicle combat is handled normally.

- Dive to the ocean floor and close down all systems in the hope the pirate ship will lose their sonar lock. Wait for either the scout ship to arrive to blast the pirate ship out of the water, or hope the ship gives up its chase. Either way, the characters have a trump card – the scout/courier. This course of action will work. Eventually the pirate ship will lose a lock. But on a 1 on a 1D20 (CT: 3 on a 3D6) someone in the submarine makes a noise which allows the pirate ship to make a sonar lock again. And the submarines will be hunted again.

- Travel back to the pyramid and enter one of the airlocks in the hope the pyramid's skin will protect them. The pyramid will protect both submarines. The problem is getting there without being depth-charged. Even at slow speed the pirate ship appears to be tracking the submarine accurately. If Braylen and the characters undertake this course of action they will be hit by depth charges. Each submarine will be hit three times, 1D6 damage per hit. Hopefully the submarines can hold out against the onslaught and retain their structural integrity. Each hit causes flooding and chaos on the submarines. They may not make it to the pyramid.

- Use the submersible as a decoy to lure the ship away from the larger, noisier *Dekar Sunrise*. The submersible is very fast – capable of 50kph, and can easily outrun the pirate ship. This should open a gap between the pirate vessel and the *Dekar Sunrise* allowing time for help to arrive or for the *Dekar Sunrise* to take shelter in the pyramid's airlocks – or for the *Dekar Sunrise* to obtain a firing solution on the pirate ship.

Regardless of the course of action taken, at some stage in the depth charging a voice crackles over the radio. It is a pirate from the ship. "We know Imperials are on board

your submarine. Turn them over, and we will not harm your crew. We have no quarrel with Adikeen natives. We only wish to rid Adikeen of the oppressors." Braylen shakes his head. "I won't give you up." If pressed by the characters about the "oppressors" comment, Braylen only says "Baron Janus often visits Adikeen. He... I'm sorry, I cannot say. I cannot talk to you about any political matters." Braylen looks sheepishly around him at his crew.

### Referee

There is an Adikeen government spy amongst the crew – the Executive Officer. He is responsible for ensuring the crew do not talk to the characters about any political matters. The subject is a closed book. Baron Janus has spread his paranoid poison throughout the tiny Adikeen population. And it appears the pirates have a real issue with Baron Janus and any Imperial influence on the planet.

The pirate ship may still be afloat after being battered by whatever the characters can throw at it. If this is the case the survivors will fight with their primitive weapons against any boarding action. If any pirates are captured (which is highly unlikely) they will only say that they hate the Imperium and what it stands for, and that Baron Janus is an evil murderer, having executed native Adikeen people for the most petty infractions. This will probably be a shock to the characters, but is vital information for the upcoming scenes. If the Executive Officer is part of any interrogations he will attempt to kill the pirates by any means possible rather than have them talk to the Imperials. This could lead to some unusual standoffs between the pirates, the characters and the divided crew of the *Dekar Sunrise*.

Eventually the pirate ship will probably be destroyed, disabled or chased off. The characters should return to the pyramid to see how Telmar is doing and see what has been uncovered.

### SCENE 3: MELTDOWN (KEY SCENE)

As either of the submarines move into the airlock of the pyramid, Telmar is radioing them. "We have a serious problem gentlemen. I need you in the control room." The characters make their way to the control room, only to find the room dimmed with red lights glowing everywhere. The holographic projector shows a representation of a strange device, part of which are glowing red. Telmar looks rather worried. "This is the powerplant of the grav-train system. It is located in this pyramid somewhere – the other lad with me is currently looking for it. I believe this powerplant powers all the trains that move from this nexus point. It appears to be malfunctioning, perhaps a result of the sudden energy requirements it was faced with when we entered the grav-train."

Telmar waffles on for a few moments before coming to the point. "I'm sure this is an anti-matter powerplant!" (this is impressive; such plants would be at least TL-17). "It is technology few have ever seen. I'm out of my depth here. I have no idea how to stop the malfunction. Antimatter powerplants have a containment system. If this is breached for whatever reason, the smallest amount of antimatter would devastate a large part of the area – perhaps a hundred kilometers from the pyramid. And of course were such an explosion to happen underwater, the effects might be far worse..."

Characters will probably want to find the powerplant at this point, and radio the *Dekar Sunrise* crew member looking for the powerplant. As the characters frantically search the remainder of the pyramid the lights periodically dim and brighten, caused by a series of power surges. South of the central core they find the crew member standing in a doorway looking into a glowing red room. The security system appears to have malfunctioned as

the door slides half open and shut. The crewmember is mesmerized by the powerplant as it glows like an angry sun in the room. It is small – only about the size of a starship missile, and is surrounded by a clear casing that is obviously not glass, but some ultra-high tech shielding system. A small control panel – ludicrously small for the immense output of the anti-matter powerplant – sits next to the ‘glass’ shielding.

Characters with Use Alien Devices Skill can shut down the powerplant on a DC 20 check (CT: 12+, no modifiers). Characters cannot Take10 or Take20. A roll of 1 on D20 is an automatic failure, and will result in a roll on the catastrophic results table as per the table below. A roll of 20 will enable the characters to roll on the beneficial results table below. Characters without this skill will be unable to do anything to control the powerplant. Anyone smashing the control panel will take 2D6 damage as the panel explodes in their face. Telmar will radio the characters to say that he estimates containment will fail in 1-2 hours.

#### **Catastrophic Results (2D6)**

2: The control panel explodes causing anyone within 1m 2D6 damage. Telmar radios that it appears the powerplant will explode in 1-2 hours as it now has no control mechanism operating. Everyone must be evacuated as the explosion would create a tidal wave that could wipe out the main island of Adikeen, as well as destroying the pyramid.

3-7: Powerplant shuts down and cannot be restarted. A power surge causes all data to be erased from the control room computers. All power is shut down and doors and airlocks have to be opened/closed manually.

8-12: No change – the powerplant continues to act in a dangerous and unstable manner. Telmar radios that it appears the powerplant will explode in 1-2 hours. Everyone must be evacuated as the explosion would create a tidal wave that could wipe out the main island of Adikeen, as well as destroying the pyramid.

#### **Beneficial Results (2D6)**

2-10: Powerplant power surges cease. Telmar suggests the powerplant and its power conduits are unsafe however, and no-one can use the grav-train system lest it overloads the system again.

11-12: Powerplant is brought under control. Power surges cease and all systems are operating as per normal.

Regardless of the outcome of the above actions, within 30 minutes the friendly voice of Baron Janus will crackle over the radio. A quick check from the scout/courier shows the Baron has entered orbit in his mercenary cruiser, and is sending both cutters down to their position.

#### **Referee**

Regardless of whether the pyramid is destroyed or not, Telmar will not have had time to decipher the computer system in the control room to any great extent. Any subsequent events will bar Telmar and the characters access back into the pyramid, either by Janus or the Imperium. There will not be any clues, beyond the automated holographic message, as to the nature of the civilization that existed on Adikeen other than the fact that is possessed TL-17 technology and a language foreign to any of those spoken in charted space. It is highly probable that in the light of subsequent events, the world will be interdicted by Imperial Navy, even if the pyramid is destroyed.

## **ACT 5: THE TURNCOAT**

*The characters are saved by the Baron, only to find the Baron is acting like a brutal dictator on Adikeen.*

### **SCENE 1: BARON IN SHINING ARMOR (KEY SCENE)**

If the characters managed to control/shut down the powerplant...

As the Baron sweeps down to their position with the two cutters, he will request to see the pyramid and its secrets. The Baron will arrive with 20 of his bodyguards and request to be brought down to the pyramid by submarine. Captain Braylen obeys, surfacing and letting on board 10 bodyguards as well as the Baron. Once inside the pyramid Janus tours the facility, and finally speaks to Telmar and the characters. “This is an incredible discovery gentlemen. You have succeeded beyond my wildest dreams. It is time to celebrate.” If the characters insist on staying on-site, the Baron will become insistent. “Please, be my guests at the manor. I’m sure you all deserve it!” If the characters still insist on staying the Baron will change his attitude completely and use the threat of force from his well armed bodyguards. Telmar and the characters will have no choice, unless they want to be taken apart by the bodyguards’ gauss rifles, but to comply. They are bundled into the *Dekar Sunrise* and moved to a cutter to be flown back to the main island. Braylen, faced with superior technology and firepower, can only comply, although it is obvious he is disgusted by the Baron’s actions.

#### **If the characters are faced with a rather large anti-matter explosion...**

The Baron sweeps down towards their position with the two cutters. After hearing the problems they are facing with a potentially lethal explosion, Janus tells them not to be concerned. He tells them to meet him on the surface. As the *Dekar Sunrise* and submersible surface, they see two cutters hovering overhead. Janus and four bodyguards fly with grav-belts from the cutter to the deck of the *Dekar Sunrise*. Janus speaks in his usual mocking arrogant tone. “Gentlemen! How nice to see you all! It appears you have a problem down below eh?” Janus takes a small black circular object from around his neck and starts touching its surface in a deliberate pattern and closes his eyes. After a minute he opens his eyes again. “Observe your sensors. You will note the powerplant has been brought back to heel.” Checks of the sensors on the submersible or scout/courier will reveal that the powerplant has normalized. Obviously the Baron has an alien artifact in his possession that allowed him to reverse the containment failure. How he did this is a mystery.

The Baron then invites them back to his manor to celebrate the discovery. If the characters insist on staying on-site, the Baron will become insistent. “Please, be my guests at the manor. I’m sure you all deserve it!” If the characters still insist on staying the Baron will change his attitude completely and use the threat of force from his well armed bodyguards. Telmar and the characters will have no choice, unless they want to be taken apart by the bodyguards’ gauss rifles, but to comply. They are bundled into the *Dekar Sunrise* and moved to a cutter to be flown back to the main island.

#### **Referee**

The alien artifact was found by Janus four years ago. It can only be used by a psionically aware character, and provides a direct neural interface with the systems in the pyramid. It

only works within 10km of the pyramid complex.

## **SCENE 2: A PERSONAL FIEFDOM?**

Telmar and the characters arrive back at the starport in a cutter, escorted by the other cutter carrying the Baron. After landing Janus walks past the starport workers, ignoring them, towards the characters. The workers bow down. The characters are again encouraged to join the Baron in a celebratory dinner at his Adikeen residence. "It is a fine building. The finest in the city." He turns and points into the distance to the tallest hill. A large building dominates the hill.

The Baron as he carries on into the solitary starport building. Escorted by a squad of guards and Captain Janicin, the Baron walks through the building towards one of his ATV's parked outside, and all Adikeen locals bow down in reverence. One local, an elderly woman standing by an ATV bows down to the Baron, crying. "Baron Janus! Please! Have mercy on my son!" The Baron stops and asks the woman who her son is. "Belar Shelar my Lord."

"Ah yes, Shelar," Janus turns to Janicin. "Remember Shelar Janicin? Joined those anti-Imperial pirates out on the ocean. Shame he was stupid enough to allow himself to be captured. Don't worry my dear, Shelar is safely incarcerated in Adikeen prison. And yes, just in case you are wanting to know, he will be executed, tomorrow. He is first on my agenda." The woman sobs, and the Baron kicks her out the way, draws a pistol and shoots her in the head. The guards do not react – they have obviously seen this side of the Baron, but the characters and Telmar have not. If the characters react, they will be restrained by the guards. There may be a firefight at this stage if the characters are armed, but the guards have combat armor and gauss rifles, so a firefight is likely to prove bloody or even fatal. Even if they do not react, the Baron approaches them.

"You have all proved very resourceful. I am pleased with your efforts in helping my friend Mr Telmar. But dinner is now cancelled. I see you need time to think about your continued service in my name. I understand that. But know that she was a traitor to the Imperium, just like her son and all those pirates out there who oppose Imperial presence on Adikeen."

The Baron gives the characters and a stunned Telmar an ultimatum. Join the Baron's cause, or give up their scout ship and be incarcerated on Adikeen for the rest of their days. "I give you one day to think about my generous offer. Guards! Escort our friends to the hotel." 10 guards surround the characters and take them away in an ATV to the hotel where they first stayed upon arrival at Adikeen.

## **SCENE 3: A FORK IN THE ROAD (KEY SCENE)**

After the shocking events of the day, the characters and Telmar are forced at gunpoint back to their hotel and into one hotel room as the sun sets over the city. Two of the Baron's guards stand watch outside the door, while the lobby of the hotel itself is guarded by another 8 guards. Within an hour of their incarceration, voices are heard outside. They hear a man saying "The Baron has requested I interrogate the prisoners. Let me pass." The door is unlocked and Captain Marcus Janicin, ex-Imperial Marines, enters. He is armed, but once the door is closed, motions the characters to be silent. He whispers. "Run the shower. I need to speak with you all." The shower is turned on, and Janicin speaks to the group as far away from the door as possible.

"The Baron has lost his mind. I joined the bodyguard detail two years ago and was

pleasantly surprised by his pro-Imperial zeal. But I have discovered something which makes my stomach turn. You can now understand, after what happened today, why the locals are so scared of Imperials; even you. Most of the locals are cowed into silence by the Baron's brutality, and some actively fight us.

"The end result is the same however – Janus has control of this planet. The governing council is made up of Janus cronies or yes-men too weak to stand up to him. What is Janus trying to achieve? I do know he has an alien artifact device." [Jancin is referring to the one that stopped the antimatter explosion, or would have, if the characters had not been successful]. "He knew something was buried beneath the waves – he found the device four years ago. He is wanting to exploit the technology you people just found to increase his power.

"He heads an organization called Chimera that is comprised mainly of fanatical Loyal Sector Guard members. Their aim is to bring Imperial control to the rest of Gateway Domain, a goal far beyond the known goals of the LSG. Chimera is the fanatical fringe of LSG."

Janicin shows the characters his LSG badge. "I'm a loyal member of LSG and I believe in its principles, but Chimera is a different story altogether. The Baron's goal is to spread his poison ideas throughout LSG, but in the Tri-Empire subsector, Janus wants to force every world into the Imperium. He has already started with Adikeen, which was considered a soft target.

"Janus is insane. He alone does not have the resources to reach his goals in this area, but he has secret Chimera operatives in the Imperial armed forces, especially the Navy. And some LSG members actively support the Baron's goals, even if they know nothing of Chimera."

"Janus is paranoid about his bodyguard. He knows I am wavering in the Chimera cause. If you manage to get out of this system, you must alert the Imperial authorities as to Chimera and the Baron's plans. Tell them what the Baron is doing on Adikeen. I'm sure they know about Chimera, but I'm not sure they realize what the Baron is doing beyond the Imperial border. Janus is wrecking the Imperium's reputation in the Tri-Empire subsector. And we have precious little latitude with independent worlds as it is, especially with the Solomani Confederation attempting to undermine the our influence."

The characters have few choices. It appears their patron is corrupt to the core. Sense Motive or psionics checks will reveal Janicin believes every word he says. The captain gives the characters a computer disk containing Chimera files. "This should be all the evidence you need." Janicin offers to help the characters escape to their scout ship and get off planet. The Baron's mercenary cruiser is in orbit, so presents a formidable obstacle. Janicin tells the characters he will neutralize the mercenary cruiser. If asked how he will accomplish this, he merely replies, "It will happen. My word is my bond. You have to make it back to the Imperium. Lets get you all out of here – take the direct approach."

## **SCENE 4: ESCAPE (KEY SCENE)**

Janicin suggests simply walking out of the hotel with himself as their guard. There is no other way out except via the front door. "I have an ATV waiting at the service entrance to the hotel." Since only Janicin is armed it would be folly to take on the other guards, so the direct approach seems to be the most logical. The characters may arm themselves with knives or whatever else they can find in the hotel room. Janicin also gives one of the characters his only other weapon, an autopistol. The characters could come up with some

other devious schemes to get out of the hotel. The referee should determine the success or failure of those schemes. Janicin suggests that if the guards don't co-operate they will have to rush them.

Janicin opens the door. "Guards! We are moving the prisoners to the cutter at the starport! I will take them!" The two guards hesitate. "But we have orders from the Baron not to move them!" An argument ensues. Janicin raises his voice, but the guards don't let the characters out of the hotel room. One guard reaches for his communicator. "I'm getting hold of the Baron..." The second the guard moves his hand Janicin opens fire at point-blank range. This is the characters' chance to act.

### Referee

Initiative and combat should be determined normally. It may be the guards get shots off, but Janicin is a seasoned veteran and has lightning reflexes. The battle will probably be short and sharp. The characters and Janicin charge down the nearest stairwell to the back entrance of the hotel. Sure enough, an ATV is waiting.

Janicin (or a character with great wheeled vehicle driving skill) hops into the drivers' seat and races towards the starport. Janicin shouts from his seat. "You'll find weapons in the locker! Arm yourselves!" There are 4 ACRs in the locker, with plenty of ammunition. There are also 4 sets of cloth armor, which may also prove useful, as well as 2 sets of LI goggles. The ACRs do not have grenade launchers however. Janicin turns off the headlights as he races towards the starport compound through the darkened city streets. The characters may wish to devise some plan to get to the scout/courier, which is sitting on the tarmac next to the Baron's two cutters. Janicin suggests simply bursting through the starport gates (it is only a 10 foot high electric fence) and gunning down any guards that stand in their way. "I'll make for a cutter. I need to get to the mercenary cruiser. Is your ship fully fueled?" The characters may have to make for the nearest gas giant to skim for fuel if they have insufficient fuel for a jump. It may be they have to do a jump-1 just to get out of the system.

Janicin (or whoever the driver is) guns the engine on the ATV and bursts through the starport gates. Stunned guards scatter as the enormous wheels of the ATV career towards them. No-one fires as it is one of their own ATVs. The vehicle makes its way towards the scout/courier as some guards start opening fire with their ACRs. Combat should be determined normally at this stage of the escape. There are only 10 guards at the starport; 2 guarding the scout courier, 4 the starport entrance and 2 standing by each the cutters. The guards' weapons are unlikely to be able to do much to the ATV, so it soon screeches to a halt next to the scout/courier, Janicin shouting at the characters to disembark and get on board their ship. Once board, the characters frantically fire up the ship systems and powerplant. The characters may also decide to use the turret armament of the Broadside of a Barn to help Janicin get aboard the cutter. The scout ship lifts off, as does Janicin's cutter. A voice crackles over the scout ship's intercom. "Good luck. I will attempt to distract the merc cruiser."

It is obvious Janicin cannot take on the merc cruiser on his own. Or can he? The answer is provided even as the old scout ship accelerates out of the atmosphere and into space. Telmar finds the frequency of the cutter and listens to Janicin admonishing the merc cruiser crew to assist with an uprising on the planet below. "You need to provide fire support for our troops down there! The locals are going crazy. Let me aboard! We can stop the uprising in minutes using the ship's weapons."

The ruse only works up to a point. As the scout ship pulls maximum-G on its race to 100 diameters, screams are heard over the comm channel. "Cease fire! Cease fire!" Janicin's cutter is fired on at point-blank range by the mercenary cruiser's massive armament. It is vaporized in seconds, then the merc cruiser starts to accelerate towards the scout/courier, hailing it to heave-to. But it is too late. Before the merc cruiser can reach effective weapon range the Broadside of a Barn reaches 100 diameters and Jumps. Depending on fuel the ship will do a Jump-1 or Jump-2. If the ship does not have the required fuel aboard it may do a small Jump to the outer system to allow it time to refuel at a gas giant, but this will be risky as there is precious little time to compute a proper Jump program. There is a chance of Misjump.

The characters have to set a course for... where?

### EPILOGUE

The characters are now known to have been in the service of the Baron, especially on Adikeen. They have important information to give to Imperial authorities about the Baron, who is likely to seek revenge. At least the characters have the disk with the *Chimera* information. This is the key to convincing the Imperial authorities. So the characters have the following choices:

- Return to Imperial space and pass on all that is known about the Baron, Adikeen and *Chimera*. The characters may even be invited back to Adikeen with an Imperial mission.
- Ignore the Imperium and make their way deeper into the Glimmerdrift Reaches. The characters are now freed from their corrupt patron. They have an extra passenger, Telmar, who may be of some assistance in the future. Telmar may want to return to Pinkatto however.
- Join the Baron and *Chimera*.

Whatever their course of action, the crew of *Broadside of a Barn* have ethical issues to consider. The Baron's activities on Adikeen – and elsewhere in the subsector – must be stopped, and the characters do not have the firepower or authority to do it. The Imperial authorities can easily stop him however, and will act once they are in possession of all the facts. They may also interdict Adikeen to prevent the secrets of Adikeen's former civilization from falling into the wrong hands, regardless of whether the pyramid was destroyed or not. But only the characters have all the facts about Janus. So the choice is obvious. The Imperial authorities will be grateful to the characters for doing their duty and coming forward. There could also be unforeseen benefits to the characters from doing the right thing that the Referee, as always, will have to administer.

If, however the characters decide to join the Baron and *Chimera*, and rat on the turncoat Janicin they will have to face all the negative consequences that decision will inevitably bring. Sooner or later the Baron will use them as expendable assets on a suicide mission, or execute them out of paranoia (or well-founded suspicion; it doesn't matter that much to the victim)

If they join *Chimera*, it won't be a pretty ending for the crew of *Broadside of a Barn*.



# EPIC ADVENTURE CHECKLIST

## Act 1: Courting The Court

Key?	Done?	Scene
K1	_____	Scene 1: Invitation
K2	_____	Scene 2: Janus
K3	_____	Scene 3: The Professor

## Act 2: First Survey

-	_____	Scene 1: Rumors along the way
K4	_____	Scene 2: Adikeen first survey
K5	_____	Scene 3: The Sea-wall
-	_____	Scene 4: Fellow Submariners
K6	_____	Scene 5: Jules Verne Had It Easy

## Act 3: Discovery

K7	_____	Scene 1: A Pharaoh's Discovery
K8	_____	Scene 2: All Aboard!
K9	_____	Scene 3: Low Berths

## Act 4: Don't Upset the Natives

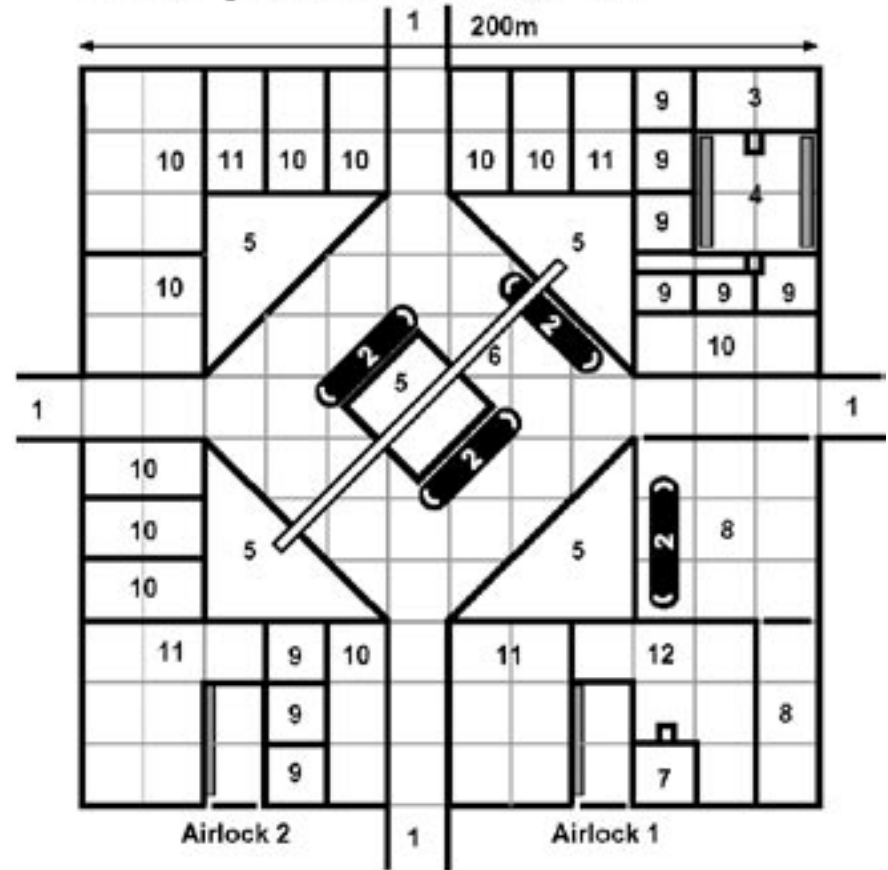
K11	_____	Scene 1: Local resistance
-	_____	Scene 2: Silent Running
K13	_____	Scene 3: Meltdown?

## Act 5: The Turncoat

K14	_____	Scene 1: Baron in Shining Armor
K15	_____	Scene 2: A Personal Fiefdom?
K16	_____	Scene 3: A Fork in the Road
K17	_____	Scene 4: Escape

# The Pyramid

Scale: 10mm = 16m



- 1 Lev-Train Entry/Exit
- 2 Lev Train
- 3 Control Room
- 4 Low Berths
- 5 Open Platforms
- 6 Overhead Walkway
- 7 Antimatter Powerplant Room
- 8 Maintenance Bay
- 9 Offices
- 10 Restaurant/Bar/Shop
- 11 Storage Area
- 12 Engineering Area

# Bestiary

## THE PELESAR

The Pelesar is native to Adikeen. A very large swimming carnivore with a huge mouth and powerful tail, Pelesars live mostly in the deep trenches of the planet's oceans, and are rarely encountered in shallows. They hunt in pairs – a male and a female. Being so inaccessible to scientists, little else is known about the creature. Pelesars have been known to attack small ships, and have been blamed for many ship sinkings down through the centuries.

**Pelesar:** Gargantuan (50-60,000kg) Swimmer Carnivore Killer; Init -2; Flee 14+, Attack 4+, Speed 32m; AC 13 (+7 AR, -4 size); AR 7; St/Lb 180/32; Atk +10 (Bite 2d12+4), +10 (Tail Slam 1d20+4); SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +8; SZ G; Str 36, Dex 6, Con 32, Int 3, Edu -, Wis 4, Cha 6, Soc -.

**Skills:** Swim+10

**Feats:** Multiattack

**Special Abilities:** Blindsight,

**Climate/Terrain:** Deep Sea

**Organization:** Pairs

### CT:

2 Swimming Killer 50-60,000kg 19D/11D Cmbt 2Dx6 Bite+Slam A1 F9 S3

# Cast of Characters

## BARON VELA JANUS

Janus is a pure-bred Vilani noble, about 62 years old (middle-aged for a Vilani). He is reasonable psionic powers in the Telepathy Sphere, although his psionic strength has waned over the years. Janus grew up on a conservative culturally Vilani world in the Fornast Sector, the youngest son of the Janus noble family. While his oldest brother took over his father's Marquis position in Fornast Sector, Vela headed for Gateway Sector to serve with the Arch-Duke's staff. He spent many years outside Imperial borders on diplomatic and other special missions for the Gateway Domain government. He was chosen for such missions because of his special psionic talents. Over the years his observations of the small non-Imperial human polities in the Gateway Domain led him to the conclusion that the only hope for the Domain in defending itself from the looming threats to trailing was the expansion of the Imperium. Vela thus became aggressively expansionistic, but retains absolute loyalty to the Archduke and the Iridium Throne. In recent years the Baron has become mentally unstable and is in some ways a pathological liar, fueled by his obsession for aggressive Imperial expansion.

Despite his insistence he was in the Imperial Navy, Vela has never served in the Navy.

High Tech (Noble level 12) TL 13 Medium human

Stamina 47, Lifeblood 12 Init +0; Speed 9 m (6 squares);

Armor Class: 14 (+4 flak jacket), Armor Rating: 4 (Flak Jacket)

Str 10, Dex 10 Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 11, Edu 12, Soc 18

SV Fort +5; Ref+4 Will +12;

### ATTACKS:

Weapon	Hit	Damage	Rng-M	Crit	ROF	Rnds
Autopistol	+6/+1	1d10	45	20 x2	1	15
Sword	+6/+1	1d8	--	20 x2	--	--
Fist	+6	1d4	--	20	--	--

Skills: Sense Motive +15, Leader +15, Bribery +15, Bluff +15, Liaison +15, Gather Info +15, K/Interstellar Law +14, Pilot +7, T/Computer +7, T/Astrogation +7.

Feats: Vessel (grav, starship, Ship's boat), Armor (light), Weapons (marksman, swordsman), Noble Presence, Noble Indignance, Iron Will, Fast Talk, Interrogation.

PSI Strength: 6. Telepathy Sphere Skill Rank 6: (Shield, Life Detection, Telempathy, Send Thoughts, Read Surface Thoughts).

Equipment: Flak Jacket, Auto Pistol, Sword.

CT: Noble: 778BAC 7 Terms Age: 60

Admin-2, Liaison-2, Bribery-2, Leader-2, Streetwise-2, Pilot-1, Grav-vehicle-1, Navigation-1, Computer-1, Sword-0, Pistol-0, Ship'sBoat-0,

## BARON JANUS' GUARDS

High Tech (Army level 6) TL 12 Medium human

Stamina 26, Lifeblood 11 Init +1; Speed 6 m (4 squares);

Armor Class: 18 (+7 combat, +1 dex), Armor Rating: 7 (combat armor)

Str 11, Dex 12 Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10, Edu 11, Soc 10

SV Fort +2; Ref+6 Will +2;

### ATTACKS:

Weapon	Hit	Damage	Rng-M	Crit	ROF	Rnds
Gauss Rifle	+8	2d12	96	20 x2	1,4,10	40
Snub SMG	+8	1d10	24	20	1,4,10	30
Fist	+5	1d4	--	20	--	--

Skills: Pilot +10 T/Sensors +9, Survival +9, Gunnery +9, Forward Observer +9

Feats: Vessel (grav, ship's boat), Armor (light, medium, vac suit), Weapons (marksman, combat rifleman, high energy,

heavy weapons), Weapon Focus (gauss rifle), Heavy Metal, Brawling.

Equipment: Combat Armor 12, gauss rifle with HUD display, Snub SMG.

CT: Imperial Army: 787787 3 Terms

Combat Rifleman-1, Brawling-1, Survival-1, Forward Observer-1, Zero-G-Combat-1, Grav-Vehicle-1, Ship's Boat-1, Vacc-Suit-0, High Energy Weapons-0.

## PROFESSOR MILEOUS TELMAR

Born on the high-tech world of Pinkatto, 52 year old Telmar has been involved in Imperial-sponsored research throughout the Glimmerdrift Reaches for decades in the planetary survey and ancient archaeology fields. Holding a Masters degree from the Imperial University of Pinkatto, Telmar is considered a bit of a flake by his contemporaries, but the Scout Service and the Gateway Domain Government has seen it fit to sponsor some of his expeditions over the years. Recently however his research fund has run very low, hence his current association with Baron Janus.

(Professional level 12) TL 12 Medium human

Stamina 40, Lifeblood 10 Init +0; Speed 9 m (6 squares);

Armor Class: 12 (+2 Jack), Armor Rating: 2 (Jack)

Str 10, Dex 10 Con 10, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12, Edu 12, Soc 12

SV Fort +4; Ref+4 Will +11;

### ATTACKS:

Weapon	Hit	Damage	Rng-M	Crit	ROF	Rnds
Fist	-1	1d4	--	20	--	--
Snub pistol	-1	1d10	18	20 x2	1	15

Skills: Drive +8, Pilot +7, P/Survey +19, T/Sensors +16, Pilot +15, T/Computer +16, T/Electronics +16, K/Glimmerdrift Reaches History +15, Navigation +15.

Feats: Vessel (grav, underwater craft, ship's boat), Armor (light), Weapon (swordsman),

Connections (professional), Research, Barter, Trustworthy,

Credit Line, Professional Specialty (Survey), Miracle Worker, Skill Focus P/Survey, Legal Eagle, Iron Will, Hacker, Jury Rig.

Equipment: Medium Range communicator, Snub pistol, Hand Computer, Jack Armor.

CT: Scientist: 677AA8 7 Terms Age: 52

Computer-3, Electronics-2, Navigation-2, Ship's Boat-1, Grav-Vehicle-1, Underwater Craft-1, Pistol-0.

## CAPTAIN MARCUS JANICIN

(Imperial Marine level 12) TL 12 Medium human

Stamina 90, Lifeblood 16 Init +1; Speed 6 m (4 squares);

Armor Class: 18 (+7 combat armor, +1 dex), Armor Rating: 7 (combat armor)

Str 12, Dex 13 Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11, Edu 10, Soc 11

SV Fort +10; Ref+5 Will +8;

### ATTACKS:

Weapon	Hit	Damage	Rng-M	Crit	ROF	Rnds
Gauss Rifle	+17/+12/+7	2d12+2	96	20 x2	1/4/10	40
Cutlass	+14/+9/+4	1d8+3	--	18 x2	--	--
Fist	+14/+9/+4	1d4+1	--	20	--	--

Skills: Spot +15, Demolitions +9, Pilot +8, Forward Observer +8, Survival +7

Feats: Vessel (grav, ship's boat), Armor (light, medium, vac suit), Weapons (marksman, combat rifleman, swordsman, high energy), Weapon focus

(cutlass, gauss rifle), Weapon Specialization (gauss rifle, cutlass) Brawling, Command Presence, Second Wind, Toughness x2.

Equipment: combat armor-12, gauss rifle with HUDS, personal medkit, long range communicator, cutlass.

CT: Imperial Marine Captain: 889787 7 Terms Age: 48

Combat Rifleman-3, Cutlass-3, Pistol-1, Brawling-1, Survival-1, Tactics-1, Leader-1, Forward Observer-1, Zero-G-Combat-1, Grav-Vehicle-1, Ship's Boat-1, Vacc-Suit-1, High Energy Weapons-1.

## CAPTAIN LOTHAR BRAYLEN

Mid Tech (Adikeen Wet-Navy Level 12) TL 5 Medium human

Stamina 48, Lifeblood 12 Init +1; Speed 9 m (6 squares);

Armor Class: 13 (+2 jack, +1 dex), Armor Rating: 2 (jack)

Str 11, Dex 12 Con 12, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12, Edu 11, Soc 10

SV Fort +5; Ref+9 Will +4;

### ATTACKS:

Weapon	Hit	Damage	Rng-M	Crit	ROF	Rnds
Autopistol	+10/+5	1d10	45	20 x2	1	15
SMG	+10/+5	1d10	45	20 x2	1,4	30

Fist	+11/+6	1d4	--	20	--	--
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Skills: Navigation +16, Driving +16, Leader +16, Forward Observer +15, Survival +16, Listen +3

Feats: Vessel (underwater, water-large boat, water-small boat), Armor (light), Weapons (marksman, combat rifleman, field artillery), Command Presence, Natural Born Leader, Heavy Metal, Vessel Specialization (Submarine), Brawling, Alertness, Tactics I.

Equipment: Jack, auto-pistol, SMG.

CT: Sailor Captain: 788787 7 Terms Age: 49

Watercraft-2, Underwater craft-2, Navigation-2, Leader-2, Forward Observer-2, Survival-2, SMG-1, Brawling-1, JOT-1, Pistol-0.

### DEKAR SUNRISE/ADIKEEN ADVENTURER CREW

Note: Autopistols are always carried by the crew. SMGs are carried in the ship's locker on both the submarine and the research ship.

Mid Tech (Adikeen Wet-Navy Level 6) TL 5 Medium human

Stamina 26, Lifeblood 11 Init +1; Speed 9 m (6 squares);

Armor Class: 13 (+2 flak jacket, +1 dex), Armor Rating: 2 (jack)

Str 11, Dex 12 Con11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10, Edu 9, Soc 9

SV Fort +2; Ref+6 Will +2;

#### ATTACKS:

Weapon	Hit	Damage	Rng-M	Crit	ROF	Rnds
Autopistol	+4	1d10	45	20 x2	1	15
SMG	+4	1d10	45	20 x2	1,4	30
Fist	+5	1d4	--	20	--	--

Skills: Navigation +9, Driving +10, Survival +10, T/Mechanical +9, Gunnery +9

Feats: Vessel (underwater (water-ship if Adikeen Adventurer crew), water-small boat, water-large boat), Armor (light), Weapons (marksman, combat rifleman, field artillery), Brawling, Heavy Metal.

Equipment: jack armor, SMG or auto-pistol.

CT: Sailor: 787766 3 Terms

SMG-1, Brawling-1, Watercraft-1 (or Underwater craft-1), Mechanical-1, Navigation-1, Survival-1, Pistol-0.

### ADIKEEN PIRATES

(Rogue level 4/ Mercenary level 2) TL 5 Medium human

Stamina 37, Lifeblood 12 Init +0; Speed 9 m (6 squares);

Armor Class: 12 (+2 jack), Armor Rating: 2 (jack)

Str 12, Dex 11 Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha10, Edu 6, Soc 5

SV Fort +5; Ref+4 Will +3;

#### ATTACKS:

Weapon	Hit	Damage	Rng-M	Crit	ROF	Rnds
Rifle	+5	1d12	72	20 x2	1	10
SMG	+5	1d10	45	20 x2	1/4	30
Fist	+6	1d4+1	--	20	--	--
Cutlass	+5	1d8	--	18 x2	--	--

Skills: T/Mechanical +11, Move Silently +11, Spot +11, Driving +9, Listen +7.

Feats: Vessel (water small boat, water large boat.), Weapons (marksman, combat rifleman, swordsman), Armor (light, medium), Stealthy, Alertness, Tracker, Brawling, Spot Trouble, Sneak Attack (+1d6), Evasion, Point Blank Shot.

Equipment: jack armor, rifle, SMG, cutlass.

CT: Rogue: 878765 3 Terms

Gun Combat-1, Brawling-1, Watercraft-1, Mechanical-1, Recon-1, SMG-1.

# Starships and Watercraft

## SCOUTSHIP BROADSIDE OF A BARN

This adventure presumes that the characters have access to a small starship such as a Scout/Courier. If an existing group of characters has a ship available, then obviously they can use that vessel.

If the characters have arrived at the beginning of this adventure after completing *Into the Glimmerdrift* then their vessel will be the Scout/Courier *Broadside of a Barn*, refitted and repaired by the Imperial Navy at Pinkatto.

The Scout/Courier *Broadside of a Barn* is old; over a century and a half old. She has had many owners, and few of them were particularly careful. Passed from hand to hand, sold on, refitted in less than reputable ports and occasionally shot up, the *Barn* is prone to a range of annoying glitches from landing gear that refuses to retract to an intermittent short that dims the galley lights. But overall she is a good ship; she gets her crew and whatever they are carrying from place to place safely, on time, and only drives them slightly nuts in the process.

Unable to carry much cargo or any passengers, the *Barn* has been making a living doing courier work along the very Rimward frontier of the Imperium. Small-package freighting of this sort is not commercially viable for most ships, but an almost-paid-for Scout/Courier can make a reasonable living at it if the crew will accept less than standard salaries or a cut of the meager profits.

The *Barn* is a standard Type S Scout/Courier in most respects. She mounts a dual turret containing twin missile racks, and carries three missiles for each rack. Spare missiles could be carried in the cargo hold and manually transferred to the turret while the ship is grounded; otherwise no reload is possible outside a starport.

A Scout/Courier is nominally worth MCr42 if purchased new. However, as the *Barn* has changed hands and aged her value has dropped. Her existing mortgage is for MCr3.4, with a monthly payment of 14,170. This is quite a lot of money to find for a ship that can make only Cr20,000 per jump freighting with a full hold.

In addition, the crew must provide for annual maintenance. A proper annual refit would cost Cr42,000, requiring an additional Cr3500 to be put away each month to cover the costs. However, maintenance is usually skimmed somewhat (this carries some risks that add up over time). It is possible to get a just-good-enough refit for about Cr25,000 if the crew are willing to bear an increased chance of Misjump and the general deterioration of the ship over time. Fortunately, if this adventure is being played as a follow-on from *EPIC 2: Into the Glimmerdrift*, the ship will have received an annual overhaul by the Imperial Navy on Pinkatto.

Life-support costs add up to Cr750 per week per crewmember. The ship will happily run on unrefined fuel which costs Cr100 per ton. This works out at Cr2400 per Jump-2.

Overheads for a month of operation, assuming two Jumps and purchasing fuel rather than skimming it, add up to Cr18,970 plus Cr750 per Jump per crewmember (or passenger, though it is unlikely that a vessel of this type would carry any). If funds are put away for a minimal refit, add Cr2100 per month, and for a standard refit Cr3500 per month must be found. This is of course in addition to any funds the crew draw for themselves or take as salaries.

## SHIP STATUS

The vessel is short on all necessary tools, rescue gear and so on. Lost or damaged items have not been replaced, and the air/raft that comes as standard with ships of this type long ago broke down and was sold off for spares. The Air/Raft bay now contains an assortment of spare parts, tools and random junk picked up here and there on the offchance it might be useful someday. However, due to the benevolence of the Imperial Navy, the ship itself has been bought up to standard with a refit, and is safe to fly.

## SHIP'S LOCKER

The contents of the ship's locker varies from vessel to vessel. Supposedly it should contain emergency equipment, a few weapons for security, spares, tools and other items necessary for operation of the ship and conduct of missions aboard it. In the case of older ships like the *Barn*, the locker tends to be a dumping ground for all manner of junk, magazine collections belonging to crewmembers who retired yeas ago, old shoes, sports gear and anything else that does not have a place of its own aboard the ship.

The Referee should 'personalize' the contents of the ship's locker. For example, there is indeed a toolkit, but it contains components from several other kits, a set of sockets that don't fit any bolt aboard the ship and a Blade that has clearly been used to lever up deckplate at some point and become very bent in the process.

If the crew needs a relatively trivial item, they may be able to find it after a period of uncomfortable rummaging around in the back of the locker, even if it is not listed here. Note that there are some items (such as vac suit spares) that will always be present. They are literally lifesavers and no sane crew would go into space without them. How accessible they are is a different matter – especially if the crew have been rummaging about looking for other items.

Suggested contents of the Ship's Locker include:

**Survival Kit, Personal** – A small backpack or belt pack containing personal survival equipment. There should be one per crewmember plus a couple of spares. Contents include:

- Small knife
- Fire-starting equipment
- Blanket/poncho
- 4 days' preserved rations
- Water bottle
- Compass
- Light cord or string
- Mirror
- Water purification tablets
- Survival manual

**Survival Kit, Vehicle** – A standard kit carried aboard lifeboats, vehicles and starships, the Vehicle Survival Kit designed to equip 4 people. Imperial Law requires that all spacegoing vessels include one kit per 4 passengers or crew. The one aboard the *Barn* has probably

been pillaged several times to deal with minor emergencies and may lack much of its listed contents at the Referee's discretion. Contents include:

- 1 Survival Rifle, plus 50 rounds shot and 50 ball
- 1 Hatchet
- 1 Field Medical Kit
- 4 Personal Survival Kit
- 4 Field Kit, Personal
- 4 Sets/Emergency Cold Weather Clothing
- 4 Combination Masks plus extra filters
- Field Rations for 60 person-days (15 days for 4 people)
- 4 Bulk water storage containers with filters
- 1 Water Purification Kit
- 2 Pressure Tent

**Arms and Protective Equipment:**

- 1 Snub Revolver
- 1 Shotgun
- 3 Blade
- 8 Combination Mask
- 8 Life-Support Mask
- Assorted Vac Suit Spares
- 1 Standard TL 12 Vac suit per crewmember

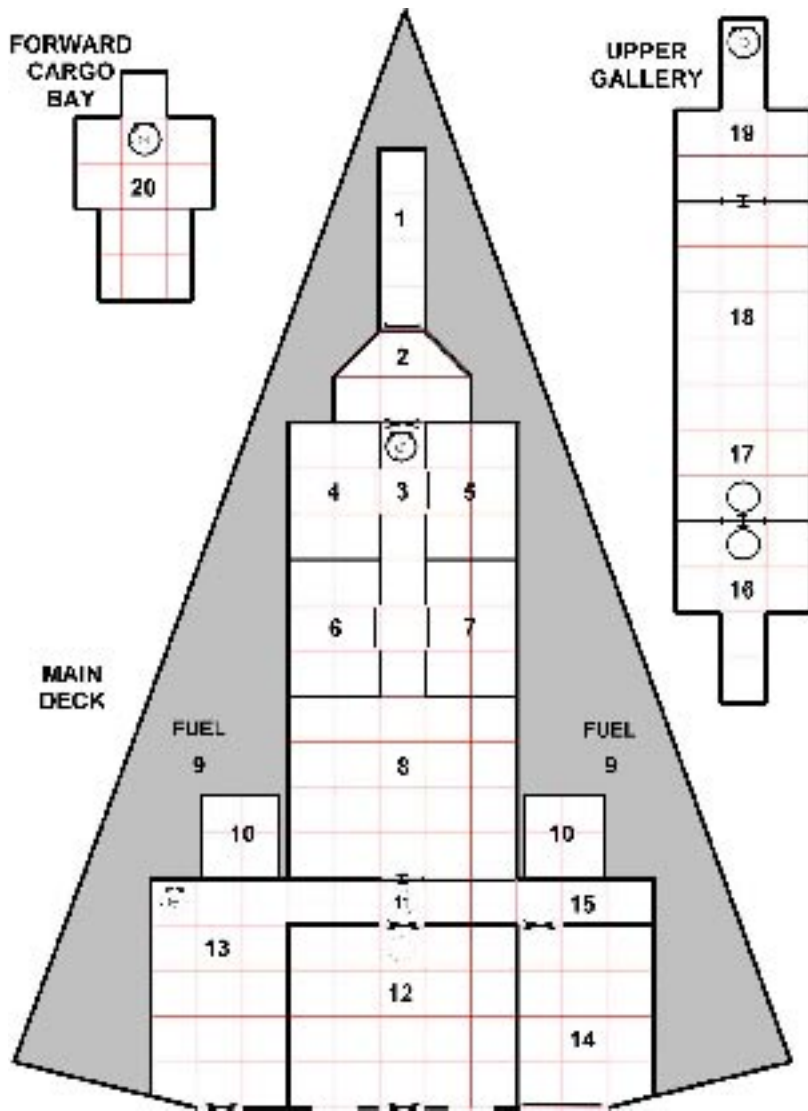
The Locker also includes slings, holsters and a few dozen rounds of ammunition for the two guns.

**Survival and Emergency Equipment:**

- Rescue Balls (Located throughout the vessel)
- Emergency Softsuits: (1 per duty station, 8 spares in Locker)
- 1 Portable Airlock
- Emergency Bulkhead Patches
- 4 Emergency Radio Distress Beacons

**Tools and Other Equipment:**

- Electronic Toolkit (Originally quite comprehensive)
- Mechanical Toolkit (Originally quite comprehensive)



### IMPERIAL SCOUT/COURIER (Type S)

<b>Class:</b> Starship, type S	<b>EP Output:</b> 4 (2 excess)	Double Turret: (empty)
<b>Tech Level:</b> 11	<b>Agility:</b> 2 (+2 EP)	
<b>Size:</b> Medium (100 tons)	<b>Initiative:</b> +2 (+2 agility)	
<b>Streamlining:</b> Yes	<b>AC:</b> 12 (+2 agility)	
<b>Jump Range:</b> 1x Jump-2	<b>Repulsors:</b> 0	
<b>Acceleration:</b> 2-G	<b>Nuclear Dampers:</b> 0	
<b>Fuel:</b> 24 tons	<b>Meson Screens:</b> 0	
<b>Duration:</b> 4 weeks	<b>Black Globes:</b> 0	
<b>Crew:</b> 1	<b>AR:</b> 0	
<b>Staterooms:</b> 4	<b>SI:</b> 100	
<b>Small Cabins:</b> 0	<b>Main Computer:</b> Model/1 (5 CPU)	
<b>Bunks:</b> 0	<b>Sensor Range:</b> Close (Mod/1)	
<b>Couches:</b>	<b>Comm. Range:</b> Close (Mod/1)	
<b>Low Berths:</b> 0		
<b>Cargo Space:</b> 20 tons	<b>Cost:</b> MCr42.578 (new)	
<b>Atmospheric Speeds:</b> NoE = 275kph Cruising = 825kph Maximum = 1100kph		
<b>Other Equipment:</b> Air/raft, fuel scoops		

- |                     |                       |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Avionics Bay     | 8. Common Area        | 15. Ship's Locker           |
| 2. Bridge           | 9. Fuel Tankage       | 16. Gunner's Position       |
| 3. Central Corridor | 10. Landing Pylon Bay | 17. Storage                 |
| 4. Stateroom One    | 11. Gallery Access    | 18. Upper Gallery           |
| 5. Stateroom Two    | 12. Drive Room        | 19. Forward Sensor Position |
| 6. Stateroom Three  | 13. Commo Bay         | 20. Forward Cargo Bay       |
| 7. Stateroom Four   | 14. Air/Raft Bay      |                             |

The Type S Scout/Courier is the most commonly seen ship in Charted Space. Small, cheap, and reasonably economical to operate, these ships have become a workhorse for both the government and military fleets; some are encountered in commercial use. Most Scout/Couriers are actually former Scout Service vessels either purchased as surplus from the government or are assigned for the private use of former Scouts currently on Detached Duty. In return for use of the ship the Scouts (and the ship itself) are subject to recall at any time for temporary or indefinite duty, as the Scout service requires.

The ship itself is built using the smallest available hull for a starship, 100-tons. The vessel carries a Maneuver drive capable of up to 2-G acceleration and a Jump-2 drive. The power plant provides just enough energy to power the maneuver drives or the Jump drive. If laser or energy weapons are installed, a larger power plant will be needed. Most ex-Scout vessels have had their powerful computer and sensor arrays removed and replaced with a standard Model/1bis computer. 4 staterooms are available for crew and passengers. Small cargoes may also be carried in the ship's compact 20-ton cargo hold. The vessel also carries a small vehicle bay, usually containing an air/raft.

The Scout/Courier requires a crew of one to operate; the pilot who must assume the duties of pilot and astrogator, and also oversees the highly automated drive section. A second crewmember is desirable. The Type S costs MCr42.578 new, and takes 5 months to build.

### Baron Janus' Mercenary Cruiser *Iridium Hope*

Baron Janus's 800 ton mercenary cruiser *Iridium Hope* is a standard Imperial design modified with an uprated TL-13 powerplant and heavy armament. Fuel capacity has been increased to 285 tons. This has reduced its cargo space but the vessel is still capable of carrying 150.2 tons of cargo. 30 troops are carried in double occupancy. The ship packs 2 triple missile turrets and 6 triple beam laser turrets (all TL-13 versions), a powerful armament for a small ship. The turrets are divided into one factor-4 missile battery and three factor-5 beam laser batteries.

#### Mercenary Cruiser *Iridium Hope*

<b>Class:</b> Starship, Type MC	<b>EP Output:</b> 45 (0 extra)	<b>Battery 1:</b> Missile Rack (x1), Attack Bonus +4 (+4 USP), Damage 4d6. <b>Battery 2:</b> Beam Laser (x3), Attack Bonus +5 (+5 USP), Damage 5d8.
<b>Tech Level:</b> 12	<b>Agility:</b> 0	
<b>Size:</b> Medium (800dt)	<b>Initiative:</b> +0	
<b>Streamlining:</b> Partially Streamlined – Sphere	<b>AC:</b> 10	
<b>Jump Range:</b> 3	<b>Repulsors:</b> None	
<b>Acceleration:</b> 3	<b>Nuclear Dampers:</b> None	
<b>Fuel:</b> 285	<b>Meson Screens:</b> None	
<b>Duration:</b> 4 weeks	<b>Black Globes:</b> None	
<b>Crew:</b> 8 (minimum)	<b>AR:</b> 0	
<b>Staterooms:</b> 25	<b>SI:</b> 205	
<b>Small Cabins:</b> 0	<b>Main Computer:</b> Model/5	
<b>Bunks:</b> 0	<b>Sensor Range:</b> Very Long (Model/5)	
<b>Couches:</b> 0	<b>Comm. Range:</b> Very Long (Model/5)	
<b>Low Berths:</b> 0		
<b>Cargo Space:</b> 150.2	<b>Cost:</b> MCr412.675 in Quantity*	
<b>Atmospheric Speeds:</b> Cruising = 2625kph	NoE = 875kph Maximum = 3500kph	
<b>Other Equipment:</b> 2 Hangers for 2x50dt craft.		

TAS Form 3.1 (Condensed)

Ship's Data (Commercial)

\* Price excludes small craft.

### Pirate Ship

<b>Class:</b> Watercraft	<b>EP Output:</b> 320 (14.04 extra)	<b>2xPintle Mounts (1 fore, 1 aft):</b> LMG, Damage 1d12 versus creatures, 1d12-5 versus vehicles. Range: 60m. <b>2xStandard Turrets (1 fore, 1 aft):</b> Light Artillery, Damage 5d12 versus vehicles. Range: 705m.
<b>Tech Level:</b> 5	<b>Agility:</b> 0	
<b>Size:</b> Gargantuan (202,000vl)	<b>Initiative:</b> +0	
<b>Streamlining:</b> Standard	<b>AC:</b> 8 (+1 Armor, -3 Gargantuan)	
<b>Pressurized?:</b> No	<b>AR:</b> 1	
<b>Climate Control?:</b> No	<b>SI:</b> 110.5	
<b>Drive Train:</b> Water – Surface	<b>Visual:</b> 4 Beam lights (75m each),	
<b>Crew:</b> 22	<b>Sensors:</b> TL-6 Sonar (5km range)	
<b>Passengers:</b> 0	<b>Comm:</b> 2x2 way Radios (Long)	
<b>Cargo Space:</b> 14,581vl		
<b>Fuel:</b> 64,000vl		
<b>Range:</b> 12,000km	Acceleration: 3kph	
<b>Speeds:</b> Offroad: 22.5kph	Very Slow: 3kph	
Slow: 7.5kph	Cruising: 15kph	
Fast: 22.5kph	Maximum: 30kph	
<b>Cost:</b> Cost: Cr845,752 Singly		
<b>Other Equipment:</b> Internal Combustion Powerplant, 3xGalleys, 1xSickbay, 1xEngineering Shop, 22xSmall Cabins, 3xShowers, 1xLow Pressure Pump (2000 liters/minute), 1xHigh Pressure Pump, 40,000 rounds for LMGs, 1000 rounds for Light Artillery Weapons, 50 Depth Charges.		
<b>TAS Form 3.1v (Condensed)</b>		

Vehicle Data (Commercial)

### Adikeen Navy Submarine

<b>Class:</b> Submarine	<b>EP Output:</b> 550 (19.74 extra)	<b>Pintle Mount, 1 fore:</b> LMG, Damage 1d12 versus creatures, 1d12-5 versus vehicles. Range: 60m.
<b>Tech Level:</b> 5	<b>Agility:</b> 0	
<b>Size:</b> Gargantuan (100,000vl)	<b>Initiative:</b> +0	
<b>Streamlining:</b> Standard	<b>AC:</b> 9 (+1 Armor, -2 Huge)	
<b>Pressurized?:</b> Yes	<b>AR:</b> 1	
<b>Climate Control?:</b> No	<b>SI:</b> 95	
<b>Drive Train:</b> Water – Surface/Subsurface	<b>Visual:</b> 2x150m Beam Lights	
<b>Crew:</b> 14	<b>Sensors:</b> Sonar (5km range)	
<b>Passengers:</b> 0	<b>Comm:</b> 2x2 way Radios (Long)	
<b>Cargo Space:</b> 1277vl		
<b>Fuel:</b> 27,500vl		
<b>Range:</b> 2000km + 400km underwater on batteries	Acceleration: 2.5kph	
<b>Speeds:</b>	Very Slow: 2.5kph	
Slow: 5kph	Cruising: 10kph	
Fast: 15kph	Maximum: 20kph	
<b>Cost:</b> Cr655,101 (no Discount)		
<b>Other Equipment:</b> Internal Combustion Powerplant, 2xGalleys, 1xSickbay, 12xSmall Cabins, 4xPassenger Seats, 2xShowers, 1xLow Pressure Pump (2000 liters/minute), 2200vl of batteries (holds 5500EP), 2 forward torpedo tubes, 30x50vl torpedoes, 10,000 rounds for LMG, pintle mounted LMG with shield, 1x100vl airlock, 1x500vl airlock.		
<b>TAS Form 3.1v (Condensed)</b>		

Vehicle Data (Commercial)



## Telmar's Submersible

<b>Class:</b> Submarine	<b>EP Output:</b> 100 (3.35 extra)
<b>Tech Level:</b> 11	<b>Agility:</b> 0
<b>Size:</b> Huge (8,000vl)	<b>Initiative:</b> +0
<b>Streamlining:</b> Standard	<b>AC:</b> 16 (+8 Armor, -2 Huge)
<b>Pressurized?:</b> Yes	<b>AR:</b> 8
<b>Climate Control?:</b> Yes	<b>SI:</b> 61
<b>Drive Train:</b> Water – Surface/Subsurface	<b>Visual:</b> 2 Beam Lights (75m), 100m Video+Monitor+LI
<b>Crew:</b> 1	<b>Sensors:</b> Sonar (5km range), Densitometer (5km range), Neutrino Sensor (5km range), Auditory Sensor (50m range)
<b>Passengers:</b> 3	<b>Comm:</b> 2 way Radio (Long), Maser Communicator (5km range),
<b>Cargo Space:</b> 987.35vl	
<b>Fuel:</b> 150vl	
<b>Range:</b> 33,600km (1 month)	<b>Acceleration:</b> 5kph
<b>Speeds:</b>	<b>Very Slow:</b> 5kph
Slow: 12.5kph	<b>Cruising:</b> 25kph
Fast: 37.5kph	<b>Maximum:</b> 50kph
<b>Cost:</b> Cr1,046,090 (One-off)	
<b>Other Equipment:</b> TL-8 Fusion Powerplant, 1x100 Strength Winch, 1xLow Pressure Pump (500 Liters per minute), 1x10 Strength, 10 Dexterity Robot Arm, 1xPassenger Bunk, 1xFresher, 1xTL-11 Synaptic Model A7 Computer, 1x2000CPU Dynamic Computer Interface, 1x3 person Airlock.	
<b>TAS Form 3.1v (Condensed)</b>	

<b>Vehicle Data (Commercial)</b>	
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## Adikeen Adventurer

<b>Class:</b> Watercraft	<b>EP Output:</b> 320 (12.22 extra)
<b>Tech Level:</b> 5	<b>Agility:</b> 0
<b>Size:</b> Gargantuan (200,000vl)	<b>Initiative:</b> +0
<b>Streamlining:</b> Standard	<b>AC:</b> 8 (+1 Armor, -3 Gargantuan)
<b>Pressurized?:</b> No	<b>AR:</b> 1
<b>Climate Control?:</b> No	<b>SI:</b> 110.5
<b>Drive Train:</b> Water – Surface	<b>Visual:</b> 4 Beam lights (75m each),
<b>Crew:</b> 10	<b>Sensors:</b> TL-6 Sonar (5km range)
<b>Passengers:</b> 10	<b>Comm:</b> 2x2 way Radios (Long)
<b>Cargo Space:</b> 34,902vl	
<b>Fuel:</b> 53,760vl	
<b>Range:</b> 10,080km	<b>Acceleration:</b> 3kph
<b>Speeds:</b> Offroad: 22.5kph	<b>Very Slow:</b> 3kph
Slow: 7.5kph	<b>Cruising:</b> 15kph
Fast: 22.5kph	<b>Maximum:</b> 30kph
<b>Cost:</b> Cost: Cr682,448 in Quantity	
<b>Other Equipment:</b> Internal Combustion Powerplant, 3xGalleys, 1xSickbay, 1xLab, 1xVehicle Shop – double size, 20xSmall Cabins, 5xPassenger Seats, 3xShowers, 1xLow Pressure Pump (2000 liters/ minute), 1xHigh Pressure Pump, 1x200 Strength Winch, 50,000 rounds for LMGs.	
<b>TAS Form 3.1v (Condensed)</b>	

<b>Vehicle Data (Commercial)</b>	
<b>2xPintle Mounts, 1 fore, 1 aft:</b> LMG, Damage 1d12 versus creatures, 1d12-5 versus vehicles. Range: 60m.	

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